



Editors:
Udaya Narayana Singh
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Editorial Policy

Translation Today is a biannual journal published by Central Institute of Indian Languages, Manasagangotri, Mysore. It is jointly brought out by Sahitya Akademi, New Delhi, National Book Trust, New Delhi, India and Central Institute of Indian Languages, Mysore. It is based on the electronic version available at the url of www.anukriti.net. A peer-reviewed journal, it proposes to contribute to and enrich the burgeoning discipline of Translation Studies by publishing essays as well as actual translations from and into Indian languages. Translation Today will feature full-length articles about translation and translator-related issues, squibs which throw up a problem or an analytical puzzle without necessarily providing a solution; review articles and reviews of translations and of books on translation, actual translations, Letters to the Editor, and an Index of Translators, Contributors and Authors. It could in the future add new sections like Translators' job market, Translation software market and so on. The problems and puzzles arising out of translation in general, and translation from and into Indian languages in particular will receive greater attention here. However, the journal would not limit itself to dealing with issues involving Indian languages alone.

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Translation Today welcomes contributions of articles and other suitable material as elucidated above for its issues in the following areas:

Annotated and original translations of all literary genres, translated excerpts from novels are accepted where they stand on their own, glossaries in any subject in any language-pair (Indian Languages TO Indian Languages or Indian Languages TO English or English TO Indian Languages), specialties in the translation profession: religious, technical, scientific, legal, commercial, specialties in the interpreting profession: court, conference, medical and community, multimedia, terminology, localization, translation and Technology: HAMT, translation memory softwares, translation teaching softwares, papers relating translation to society, to culture, to philosophy, to poetics, to aesthetics, to epistemology, to ontology, to movements like feminism, subalternism, to power and so on, translation universals etc., translator pedagogy, translation curriculum, translation syllabus etc., ethics, status, and future of the profession, translator-related issues: legal, copyright issues etc., squibs which are short pieces throwing up an interesting problem or analytical puzzle, reviews of translated texts, dictionaries and softwares, letters to the Editor.

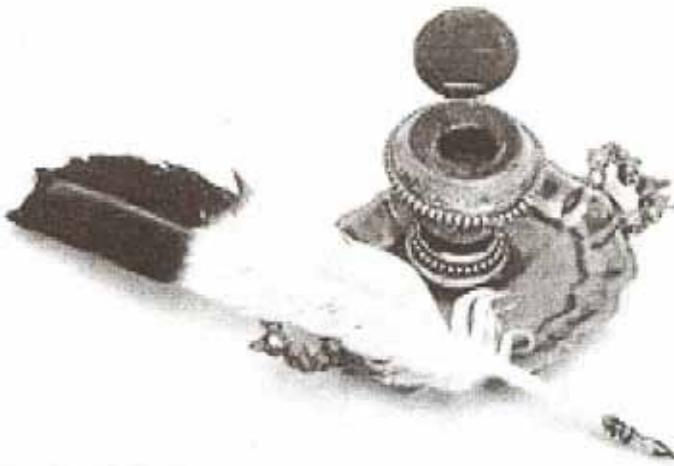
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Udaya Narayana Singh & P.P. Giridhar

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Editorial

The Editorial Board is pleased to place in the readers' hands this print-based version of the online journal, **Translation Today**. As the reader can see, the issue covers a wide variety of topics on translation.

In his "Translation: Certain Posits and Praxis", Ravichandra talks about certain postulates of translation and their praxis. Translation, which 'is transgression of the unchanging essence of the original', strives towards the end of the commonwealth where people can converse with each other without the barrier of language. An important function that he proposes for the translator is that he is to provide the necessary tool through his act for people to belong in the politically correct process of sympathizing. In his "Archives, Arcades and the Translation of Neologisms", Probal Das Gupta lays bare and lights up the dynamics of the whole field of neologisms. In her disquisition on "Translating Mantras", Anjali Gera Roy sheds light on the problems of translation of phonocentric texts, arguing how the linguist's conception of the sign is inadequate and relating problems of classical translation to the difference in the perception of the sign in phonocentric and scriptocentric cultures. E.V. Ramakrishnan in his "Translation as Literary Criticism" makes the interesting point of when translation could function as literary criticism. Arguing that for translation to perform the role of literary criticism the language should already have a clearly defined literary field with its own internal dynamics, and that the literary translations that intervene in culture and project alternative strategies of reading and writing, in effect, function as literary criticism as they force open the very boundaries of what is considered 'literary'. Somsukla Banerjee in her paper, 'Beyond the Literary and the Literal', tries to find out some solutions to the problems in the translation of creative fiction and some principles to help improve the translation by making a tentative exploration of the stylistic equivalents in translation of modern Hindi fiction. She undertakes this venture by analyzing two English versions of a short story by Mannu Bhandari titled *Nayak Khalnayak Vidushak* and discusses the deceptive equivalence in the two English versions. In his essay "Overtranslation, Undertranslation and Loss of Meaning", Udaya Narayana Singh discusses the problems and obstacles that often mar the joys of reading literary texts in translation either because the text generated has fallen far short of expectations resulting in a process of 'undertranslation' or because it has overshot the target resulting in overtranslation. The essay tries to make one aware of the fact that it is not at all unusual to enjoy literary creativity of authors writing in distant socio-cultural environments in one's own language, but

that one must be aware of the inherent difficulties with such third literatures. T.S Sathyannath, in his paper “Translation and Reception as a Cultural Process”, argues for a need to understand translation as a process of cultural production and consumption rather than as a literary one by going through different modes of representations attempted in the history of modern Kannada literature, particularly during the period 1920-50, which constitutes the formation period for the genre. This paper problematizes the emergence of the genre tragedy in Kannada in the form of translations and adaptations and the reception and controversies that surrounded it during the early phase of its experimentation. In his paper “An On-line Lexicographic tool for Translation”, G.S. Mohapatro proposes a new outlook for translation mechanism in Indian languages by suggesting a two-staged development of a lexicographic tool for translators. He lists the steps and the procedures to construct an online lexicographic tool.

Madhavi Apté’s paper, “Translating Poetry: Interface with Emily Dickinson’s Poems” presents three aspects of her translation experience with Emily Dickinson’s poems namely, linguistic, cultural and managerial. In the process of writing this paper, she reviews many recent theories of translation. In addition to subscribing to Malena’s views regarding the negotiation of the texts and their meanings, her own theory relies on her awareness of the concepts in modern Linguistics, Sociolinguistics and takes into account the practical constraints the translator has to face. In his paper, “From Devaki to Yashoda: The Intra-Authorial mediation in translating one’s plays”, Ramesh Prasad Panigrahi endeavors to study the process of translation that takes place within the individual author-translator, a playwright and director in Oriya and a translator into English. The focus of his paper is to attempt a hermeneutical approach to translation and his arguments are based on his personal experience. In his paper T.R.S Sharma discusses the problems usually faced by the translator in terms of four overlapping Indian aesthetic categories, that is, categories that characterize the four major schools of criticism in Sanskrit, which flourished in India during the first millennium AD: Rasa, Riti, alamkara and dhvani. In her article on the “Translator’s Style”, Aditi Ghosh argues that author ‘style’ is clearly distinguishable. She outlines the various aspects and reasons for the style of a translated text not being considered as the translator’s style by discussing Mohanty’s Oriya novel Harijan. She concludes that the ‘style’ of the translator reflected in the translated work is in fact the translator’s style, not that of the author of the original. In the paper, “Writer-Translator Discourse” Suneetha Rani points out the difficulties involved in translating an aboriginal text. She discusses some of the issues that she faced while translating two texts written by

aboriginal women, one autobiography, *Wandering Girl* by Glenyse Ward and another autobiographical novel *Karobran* by Monica Clare in connection with translation as a writer-translator negotiation and translation as research.

Giridhar throws up a thought for public debate on translation theory.

In the 'Translations' section there are translations of some Telugu poems by Alladi Uma and Sridhar.

We will have special guest-edited issues on topics like Translation and Power, Postcolonial Translation and so on in the future.

Udaya Narayana Singh & P.P. Giridhar

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Translation: Certain Posits and Praxis

RAVICHANDRA P. CHITTAMPALLI*

If all act of writing involves a certain essentialist process, that of an encoding in a specific language, the act of translation is one that problematizes writing. All translations are negotiations, and as such the borders of translation as a paradigm are amorphous. Translation at once deconstructs the given of the assumed relationship between the writer and the work. Translation deals with the other. It is anthropological at the exploitative end and aesthetic at the romantic. It is transgression of the unchanging essence of the original. Each translation, therefore, is popularly conceived as a minimal release of a word, a historicizing of the ahistoric meaning. Translation is the meant of the meaning, and therefore at the point of emergence necessitates a further othering. Lawrence Venuti sums up the status of translation today in the following words (Venuti 1992:3):

"The hierarchy of cultural practices that ranks translation lowest is grounded on romantic expressive theory and projects a platonic metaphysics of the text, distinguishing between the authorized copy and the simulacrum that deviates from the author".

Translation in India is perhaps the result of a constant need to familiarize oneself with the canonical literature. It is doubtful how many could commonly access either Pali or Sanskritic texts. Yet again, translations from Sanskrit into other languages have existed commonly on palmyra for a long time. Such translations were necessarily outside the religious and the ritualistic needs of a society. One may therefore very well arrive at a conjecture that in India at least, translation was an activity which secularised the text, and helped establish distinct linguistic traditions in a regional context. Nonformal events like *Kathakalakshepa* have traditionally

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resorted to translation as orature. What is being stressed at this point is the remarkable tentativeness of the act of translation. It is an intellectual process where discourses are set in flow. It is, therefore, almost always meaningless to ask the question: 'What is being translated?' For, the question assumes that there is not only a unitary text of frozen contour but that there is a tenacious physical relationship between the author and the text that is being translated. Such an assumption can hardly be tenable in the face of Derrida's categorical assertion:

"And the sign must be the unity of a heterogeneity, since the signified (sense or thing, noeme or reality) is not in itself a signifier, a trace...The formal essence of the signified is presence, and the privilege of its proximity to the logos as phone is the privilege of essence."

It is therefore that translators abrogate a demanded responsibility to be true to the original. After all translating the original is a notion that is fraught with problems. For Andrew Benjamin, the act of translation is to question the origin itself. Look at what he says:

"The origin as that which is put into question brings Psychoanalysis and translation into contact since both are marked by the inevitability and necessity within their origins-including their own conception of the origin – of the process named within Psychoanalysis as 'Nachtra Glichkeit', a term which at this stage can be translated as 'deferred action', or 'action at a distance'.

Such notions of the "essence" and of the "origin" lead to either conceiving of writing as an act of representation (Presence as a "Supplement of a supplement"- Derrida J. 1994:298), or as what interpolates. However, in both instances, what is at stake is the notion of translation as a search for the precise match. It is possible to concur with such a departure from a conservative notion of precision in translation. One is at this juncture reminded of Octavio Paz's own belief that poetry is an act of divorcing a word from its historicity (Octavio Paz, Introduction, Selected Poems.). If the act of writing is an act of freeing a word from its texted associations, translating that word should then necessarily involve not merely

identifying the word in a climate of synonymous resonance. There are in fact always, in most cases, synonymity. However, synonyms betray. So then, is translation a search for uniqueness? One answer rests perhaps in the question: why does one translate? The answers could be many. However it is also conceivable that a translator is born when (s)he embarks on a sanguinary search for that which allows complimentarity in life. It would perhaps be wise to involve Umberto Eco (1997:350-351) at this juncture:

"The solution for the future is more likely to be in a community of peoples with an increased ability to receive the spirit, to taste or savour the aroma of different dialects. Polyglot Europe will not be a continent where individuals converse fluently in all the other languages; in the best of cases, it could be a continent where differences of language are no longer a barrier to communication, where people can meet each other and speak together, each in her own tongue, understanding, as best they can, the speech of others".

Translation strives towards such an end, of the commonwealth. The business of a translator then could perhaps be to bring the genius of one language into the climate of the other. That would constitute a practice in which the translator would work to the full the resources of the target language. It does not merely involve a couple of dictionaries, a thesaurus and a book of grammar. Look at what a significant translator of our classical texts, T.R.S. Sharma says in a recent book of his (TRS Sharma 2000:113):

"You need to savour the sound and the semantic values of the words and to be in love with them. Surrendering to the text in this way means most of the time being literal- for the "spirit killeth and the letter giveth life". That is how you retextualize the original in the receiving language. To maximize the problematic of translation, you need that the language you translate from and the one you translate into are alien, and not cognate languages".

Sharma is here talking about the aesthetics that is involved in the act of translating literary texts. Even as he summons Baudrillard's notion of the simulacra to disinvest the faith in the notion of the "real" (loc. cit. p.118), he clearly prioritises the

translator's right to freedom from the linguistic categories of the source language. Such freedom is not absolute. No translator really takes it to be so. It is a limited freedom which a musician or a dancer enjoys in the performance of a composition. Consider, for instance, the necessary freedom that a translator may have to involve while translating a poem from Kannada into English. The poem 'Mahamaye' by U.R.Ananthamurthy has a second stanza that runs to an uninterrupted 25 lines. In its English translation the stanza is increased by 2 lines, with two sentence breaks. The first constitutes four lines while the second, eleven lines. And yet, grammatically the first sentence of four lines remains a fragment, in spite of the effort to make the fragment semantically whole. The effort of the translator was to somehow capture the slow movement towards a crescendo that the stanza in Kannada attempts. Apart from the achieved movement in its musicality, the significance of the verbal dynamics may yield very little.

In another instance, in that of G.K.Ravindra Kumar's poem titled 'Sarapali', which is, descriptively, 'linked chain of strong metal', normally iron or steel, the translator has taken recourse to its metonymic meaning and has titled the translation as **THE SEQUENCE**. Thus what has a metaphoric significance in Kannada is translated into its metonymic state in English. In that act the translator has attempted to provide for his own prejudice as to the evocative possibilities in English of a word like 'chain' acting as a metaphor. Though alliteration in language may not be retained when translated, the loss would prove minimal when other poetic elements such as onomatopoeia, internal rhyming, etc either substitute or help recapture the movement of the lines in the original. This is an act of finding resources embedded in the target language which could provide, not so much escape routes, but approaches to the genius of the host.

No word exists in any language without its cultural resonance. Therefore, in the task of transferring those cultural inscriptions of a word into the target language lies the genius of a translator. It is precisely here that the exercise of freedom prefigures. Consider for instance the title *Bhujangaiahna Dashavatharagalu*, a novel by Srikrishna Alanahalli. The word *dashavatara*, literally 'ten incarnations' does not signify any sacred connotation in this

context. The word *dashavatharagalu* is replete with irony. Again, if literally, *dasha* is ten, one would be hard put to account for ten aspects or events in the life of Bhujangaiah that figure as benchmarks. It is therefore at once imperative to slough any suggestion to ten in English where the number connotes nothing. *Avataragalu* can perhaps be translated as reincarnation. But the word in English hardly carries the ironic import it has in Kannada. Interestingly the English language is already familiar with the word *avatar*, and is today popularly used synonymously with unreal representations such as the mask. It is also meant as a masquerade. Thus it grows possible for the translator to title the translation as *The Avatars of Bhujangaiah*, bringing to the reader in English what it had brought to the reader in Kannada.

The one important function that is attempted by the translator here is to provide the necessary tool through his act for people to belong, not in a process of assimilation, but in the politically correct process of sympathizing.

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Archives, Arcades, and the Translation of Neologisms

PROBAL DASGUPTA*

For convenience, here is a summary of the expository sequence in this paper. Section 1 observes that neologisms are non-domesticated new expressions, and that translators responding to the problem of tackling neologisms often need to go back to the basics and develop an overall understanding of the issue of newness: The issue is fundamental since a translation must both be new to the TL (and meet a felt need for something missing in the TL) and keep in touch with old trends in the TL (so that normal TL readers understand the translation and do not find it opaquely foreign).

Section 2 on domains and innovative styles shows that all domains of discourse have their own technical details that keep evolving, producing novelties for the translators in that field to keep up with. The way this happens varies from domain to domain.

Section 3 addresses the question of why abbreviations become so frequent in all domains of the modern use of language in contrast to classical societies. It is argued that this happens because the modern period brings with it an overriding interest in saving time and in abbreviating all processes.

Section 4 argues that modernity prizes originality, that original creators wish to mark their work with special identifiers, that expressions serving in this role become name-like, that names need to be entered in registers in some sense, that registers in traditional societies tended to emanate from a single monarchical source of power and thus to belong to a single central archive, and that, in contrast, the typical registers in modern societies are the decentralized body of newspapers which hold and disseminate public information.

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Section 5 notes that the arcades of newspaper-borne and other advertisements of decentralized originality do not, in modern social formations, quite supersede the traditional archives which modernity retains. But they prevail in modern societies. This creates a nonisomorphism between the body of records and therefore of resonances in a traditional society and the corresponding set of resonances in a modern formation, posing acute difficulties for a translator working at the interface between a traditional and a modern language.

Section 6, on Less Equipped Languages or LELs, proposes that the problem is solved by the expectant speech communities of LELs who are waiting for imported innovations, among other things, to sweep them off their traditional feet. This section lists certain types of neologism and suggests practical strategies for facing the different problems they pose for translating from a MEL to LEL.

The seventh and the last section suggests that journalists and educators are the strongest forces implementing language modernization, and that they mediate between the public and the language planning authorities. But language planners are generally too conservative to cope with the pace and type of innovations now in progress, for structural reasons having to do with the composition of the relevant planning committees in their world societies. Ways around this problem are pointed out.

1. Introduction

1.1. Translation and Newness

Neologisms are, at the most evident level, new words or expressions not yet regarded as completely naturalized or domesticated elements in the language. For instance, non-Russian journalists reporting the achievements of Mikhail Gorbachev in the eighties adopted the loanwords *glasnost* and *perestroika* in their respective languages to describe his brand of 'openness' and 'restructuring'. These neologisms spread rapidly and became part of the common terminological currency all over the world. But they are not ordinary words in our languages. They have remained neologisms.

The problem takes on an added dimension in cases like *sputnik*, which in the 1950s was a new coinage in Russian itself - in contrast to the ordinary Russian words *glasnost* and *perestroika*. In the *glasnost* case, an ordinary SL term gives rise to neologisms in the TLs. But *sputnik* instantiates a different pattern. Here both the SL word and its copies in the TL are brand new. A neologism is translated by a neologistic loanword. However, the difference is not as big as it looks. Although *glasnost* and *perestroika* already existed in Russian, Gorbachev gave them a twist and turned them into his brand names for the new social technology - was advertising. Thus, even in Russian, *glasnost* and *perestroika* count as 'semantic neologisms' (old words with the new meanings) in their Gorbachevian use which led to their massive adoption all over the world.

The above cases are prototypical examples. They help us to focus on the general problem of neologisms. The fundamental question is how translators can decide when to resort to neologisms in their work and what strategies to use when direct borrowing is not a viable option.

We can tackle this question effectively if we go about it with some circumspection. Our approach here is to explore the general issues of innovation in language in the context of translation.

1.2. The Translation Novelty Paradox

Consider the following paradox: Any TL document D translated from an SL must by definition be new to TL. If D already existed in TL, nobody would need to translate the material from an SL. But D must consist of pieces (i.e. words and expressions) which are old in TL, for if they do not count as common currency then the audience will not understand, defeating the whole purpose of translation. Thus, D must be new to TL, and yet must be composed of material that is old in TL.

The Translation Novelty Paradox, as we may call it for reference, reflects a contested area where two forces pull the translator in opposite directions. There is the need for D to preserve continuity with existing TL writings. This need propels us towards traditional, comfortable translations. But D also needs to perform a

distinct rupture with the tradition and specifically make room for the exact content of this text coming from outside – a need that encourages technical, accurate translations, capable of specifying discontinuities with some rigour.

The direction in which the stronger winds blow changes as we move from traditional to modern social formations. In traditional contexts, even the original SL text would have normally been written along prescribed lines, with little or no self-conscious innovation. And a traditional TL translation D naturally follows suit, departing minimally or not at all from the composition conventions in the TL culture. But in the modern period marked by the rise of the technical domains, much writing takes place under the shadow of what we shall call the technical contribution imperative. The principle demands that all serious statements must (a) contribute some new and original thinking self-consciously marked in the very form of the text, and (b) link this work to some general impersonal system of expressing thoughts and feelings with objectivity and precision. Both the particular technique of the individual writer and the systematic technology of the collective field of such writing make modern texts especially prone to exact and differentiated modes of expression. This often takes the form of neologisms in original writings as well as translations. For only innovations can sharpen the ordinary, diffuse language into a vehicle for the required level of exact expression.

Thus, authors and translators typically strove for an old, tradition-maintaining appearance in their writings in classical cultures. Correspondingly, most writers and rewriters strive to package their products as stimulatingly novel commodities in the modern market. Our approach will be to grasp this overall contrast in terms of the classical archive of traditional texts and translations versus the modern arcade of textual wares advertised as excitingly special, new, and definitely to be bought. The archive and the arcade present two different modes of putting texts together to build larger aggregates. We will now explore various dimensions of the archive/arcade conception of the novelty problem in translation studies.

2. Domains and Innovation Styles

The problem of novelty shows up differently depending on the domain of language use involved. Fields like science, technology, business, law, public administration, management or medicine constantly come up with whole sets of new terms and usages. They all challenge the translator. But not in the same way. It is useful to notice some of the variations.

2.1. Business and Law vs Science and Technology

At the most obvious level, business and law are more conservative domains than science and technology. While business people deal with new merchandise all the time, they treat merchandise description terms as mere names to be placed in lists. The real business terms which make their discourse do not easily change. And the judiciary's tendency to preserve continuity and to resist change is of course well known. In contrast, the spirit of innovation is what keeps science and technology going. Practitioners of those fields have to propose new ideas and invent new methods and machines in order to survive. So they are compelled to use new terms reflecting the constant changes in their thinking.

2.2. Business Language vs Advertisements

Of course, business has to make use of technological innovations all the time. Any successful entrepreneur must exploit new technology to cut costs and beat the competition. Business success also depends on convincing the public that one is producing better wares than one's rivals are offering. This job of convincing the public is done in the field of advertising, which is not quite the same as the field of business proper for our purposes. Consider a newspaper. The business pages have an entirely different look to them, in organization and language, compared to the reader-friendly, graphically attractive advertisements. This shows that the language of advertising and the language of business pose entirely different challenges to the translator. Advertising is a field where linguistic novelty is a constant feature. Business discourse proper is not. When business people discuss technological innovations for reasons internal to technology rather than business. But that gives

the translator headaches which can be solved only by consulting the relevant technological glossaries and reference works, not by a careful study of business language in general. This is what is meant by saying that business is linguistically a conservative domain.

2.3. Innovations in Non-technological Domains

However, this type of classification of domains is only superficial. It focuses on the frequency of use of new terms alone. The translator has to deal with novelty as a whole. Even in terminologically conservative domains like business, there is a constant process throwing up new abbreviations for the translator to decipher. Correspondingly, legal language, even if it rests on a firm and slow-changing system of usage, naturally refers to the whole apparatus of laws and precedents constituting the systemic background presupposed in all legal discussion within a given country. Translators can cope with such material only if they know their way around the legal literature of that country. The problem is compounded in a nation like the United States of America, where much political reform takes place outside the legislature in the form of landmark judgments by the Supreme Court. For in such a country the normal political discourse of journalism is replete with references to specific cases, judgments and legal discussions.

Thus, in practice, even the non-technologically oriented domains have their own technical details which keep changing as the domain evolves, producing novelties for the translator in that field to keep up with. It is for this reason that translators have to acquire and keep refreshing some specialized disciplinary knowledge in addition to an overall command over the SL and the TL. They have to follow the field, keeping up with new developments in it on both sides of the SL-TL divide that they are trying to bridge. This is the only way to retain enough familiarity with the scene to make it possible to figure out the meaning of particular abbreviations or other new details under the real-life conditions of specialized translation, where time is a scarce resource and workers have to find answers to their puzzles very quickly.

3. Abbreviative Practices

When we classify domains the way we did in section 2, it may seem to us that some are more technical than others in some obvious sense. If we accept the view presented earlier about the role of the technical in the increased frequency of novelty in modern language use, it then follows that a field is going to be neologism-prone in proportion to its degree of technicality. But abbreviations pose a problem that cuts across domains. They are characteristic of modern languages in general. Classical languages used abbreviations very sparingly.

3.1. Frequency of Abbreviations

Why are abbreviations so frequent in all domains of the modern use of language? The most obvious reason is that modern life prizes time as a scarce and highly valuable resource. The use of abbreviations is a gesture marking our general impatience with the traditional method of using long-winded names and repeating them. In other words, the rise of abbreviation as a general social force reflects the same underlying factors as the industrial-technological imperative as a whole. We wish to save valuable time and then use the time for other purposes – to be chosen by relatively free human beings under conditions shaped by the new, labour-saving, technology-driven, abbreviative society. Paradoxically, the need to be in tune with one's time forces people to keep learning and relearning standard lists of abbreviations, losing some of the precious time one would have expected to save. This paradox, again, is a version of the general irony of a technology which tries to release people's energies for their individually chosen desires but which in practice binds people's tastes by promoting ruthless advertisement campaigns as a general commercial practice, turning nearly all new words into trademarks or brand names.

3.2. Translators and Clarification

Evidently, the translator is a person who tries to remove the language barrier and other obstructions preventing clear communication. It is thus our job, as clarifiers, to help demystify unnecessary jargon and pointless abbreviations. But "unnecessary" is the operative term here. Translators seek high fidelity. Modern

translators live in a period when this is abbreviated as hi fi in the context of sound recording practices of the postwar period. This example shows that abbreviations, like other key words emblematic of a particular discursive domain, encode the domain itself and thus often function as indispensable markers of how the reader should situate what is being said. They serve to indicate the context and are not mere decorations which a clarity-seeking translator may remove at will. This is also true of other uses of technical language in passages intended for lay audiences. Translators may be able to detect cases where the SL author is simply showing off or is choosing technical rather than lay language because of irrelevant factors like the inability to think of ordinary terms (some authors get used to their specialized jargon and become unable to shed that diction even when addressing a wider readership). In such instances, it is their privilege and even their duty to remove the extra technicality when they translate, including opaque abbreviations. But very often the apparently unnecessary technical terms or specialized, context-bound abbreviations in fact perform the important task of telling the reader quickly what context is being invoked. Not only the author, but the reader too is in a hurry in the modern age. Thus, both parties to the transaction of hasty communication need such blatant markers of context for the encoding and decoding jobs to run smoothly.

3.3. Coinage and Acceptability

At this juncture it may be useful to think about the relation between abbreviations that save time and the entire question of the technical. It may help us to collect our thoughts around a passage from Cicero cited by Lefevere. Cicero, who translated many important Greek texts into Latin two thousand years ago, wrote about the neologisms he had to use: "By giving a Latin form to the text I had read, I could not only make use of the best expressions in common usage with us, but I could also coin new expressions, analogous to those used in Greek, and they are no less well received by our people, as long as they seemed appropriate" (*De Oratore* Book 1:35).

The Cicero passage is interesting for two reasons. First, of course, it is important that the problem of neologisms was noticed

so early, in the context of the first high volume enterprise of translation – the Greek-to-Latin translation enterprise. However, and this is the second point, Cicero puts the problem in terms of coinage and public acceptability, not in terms of the use of the technical. In other words, the words he deal with do not strike him as being special words marking particular domains and deserving to be called technical or specialized vocabulary items whose use should in principle be controlled by the norms of a particular discipline. It is natural for Cicero to assume that the public alone controls the norms of all words. Thus the criterion of general acceptability to the community is decisive for him.

3.4. Sublanguages and the Role of Specialists

In contrast to that classical situation, we now live in a world where not only abbreviations proper, but even characteristic technical terms (such as Corpus Planning, a technical term in the language planning subfield of sociolinguistics) function as markers of a technical sublanguage subject to norms distinct from the general rules governing the language of the community. It is assumed, by specialist and layman alike, that the authority to discuss such sublanguages and to decide how their terms are to be appropriately used belongs to the specialists of the relevant disciplines or professions. The way we think about the matter is that those specialists spend all their time thinking about these things. Normal people do not have enough time to take the trouble of learning all the relevant details. So it is natural for ordinary members of the community to leave these technical matters to the specialists. This strategy, we ordinary people assume, saves us time and leaves us free to pursue our interests instead of getting caught in the specialized worries of this or that discipline at every step.

Notice, then, that the structure of a modern way of life, where the public saves time by allowing many differentiated subsocieties to develop and to worry about this or that set of technical details including the sublanguages in which those details need to be talked about, encourages the proliferation of technical jargon and abbreviations. For such an arrangement means that the members of each specialized subcommunity are encouraged to talk only to each other, not to people outside the boundaries of the discipline. They

are also encouraged to save time for everybody, which means saving time for themselves also, if possible. This leads them to use abbreviations as much as they can, and to use ordinary terms in an unusual fashion which may be opaque to the uninitiated outsider but is understandable within the field. Used opaquely, even ordinary terms turn into abbreviations for entire collocations and ways of thinking that serve as common currency within a sublanguage but make no sense outside it. Hence the scene we have been describing in the earlier sections.

3.5. Speed and Specialization

Thus, the question of the technical revolves around notions like saving time and specialized subcommunities whose discipline-bound labour saves time for the community in general and also for the subcommunities themselves by using abbreviations or by deploying ordinary words in a way that turns them into abbreviators of shorthand-like devices. This is not surprising. The logic of modern societies has to do with saving labour time and increasing productivity so that all members of society have a better life. The essence of high technology is to save more and more drudgery and thus release human energies for purposes that individuals are free to choose. One consequence is a mode of deployment of linguistic resources, like key words and abbreviations, which makes it possible to save communicative time, working rapidly and efficiently. Thus, speed and specialization go hand in hand.

4. Names, Codes, and News

4.1. Form of Creativity and Naming

We turn now to the connection between the speed-specialization complex just described and the point about novelty broached earlier. Why do modern societies desire to maximize the free action of individuals – a goal that leads them to resort to technologies that minimize the routine labour individuals have to do? Because we all want to release the energies of everybody's personal, expressive creativity in various domains. What form does creativity take? An original form, not bound by rigid traditions. Can technologies themselves turn into stifling rigidities? They can, if

one does not frequently change the technological environment – a recycling which the technical world carries out in any case because of the pressures of competition and other familiar factors. Against the background of fast changing technologies, individuals trying to be creative have to express themselves clearly and distinctly, marking the originality of their creations. This is also true of persons who work as innovators in technical fields. Hence the general tendency to seek catchy titles for books, novel names for ideas and products, and other attention-grabbing identifiers of originality – not only in the world of advertising, but quite generally throughout all walks of life in a modern society. This is how one ends up getting a world featuring both abbreviations in the generalized sense and names in a sense we are about to examine in detail.

An original inventor seeking to safeguard his or her intellectual property rights normally proposes a unique label or designation identifying the creation as a new entity. This designation is notionally equivalent to the name given to a newborn baby to identify it. Even outside the legal context of patenting or otherwise securing rights over intellectual property, there is nowadays this general tendency to make up a brand name for something one has thought of, and an increased willingness on the part of our societies to uphold the rights of individuals to use and disseminate such names.

4.2. Solution of Translation Problems

The novelty involved in such naming or renaming takes somewhat different forms in different discourse domains. For example, natural and mathematical scientists tend to invent and use special words or word-combinations uniquely identifying phenomena and products. It is thus possible to keep up with their activities, by publishing periodically updated codifications – lists of generally accepted terms and what they designate. In contrast, scholars in the humanities and the social sciences prefer to reuse for their specialized purposes the expressions of ordinary language. A Lakatosian philosopher of science speaking of a research programme does not use the expression in the sense of a project at a university or institute seeking financial support from grant-giving

bodies, but as a technical term for a dynamic cognitive matrix in which theories are formulated and considered. Sometimes it is unclear whether a term is being used technically, or is being highlighted in its ordinary sense which the thinker wants all readers to pay special attention to as in Ludwig Wittgenstein's ambiguous use of term, 'game', for example. Thus, translation problems for the natural and formal sciences can be solved in principle if the TL possesses or can invent the necessary new terms. In contrast, translation problems in human and social science disciplines are much more intractable in principle. A translator needs to be a sensitive reader capable of figuring out at which points the text makes a "move" and gives a particular locution the potency of technically or rigorously used wording, calling for special measures in the translated text.

4.3. Code Book or Listing of Identifiers

Abstracting away from these variations across discourse domains, one may speak in general of the formally innovative identifiers which authors use to mark their originality. For certain purposes, these identifiers may be regarded as names. Whether a society actually sets up terminological committees to keep track of these names or not, one may in principle imagine that all such names enter some sort of notional census listing, just as every newborn child gives rise to a new entry in a society's register which may or may not exist as a matter of physical fact. So imagined, the 'census listing' of identifiers is a codification of the naming process.

The idea of a code book, especially in the context of India as a culture whose code books were *samhitaas*, eternally valid codifications assumed to represent the structure of reality itself, may seem inappropriate for the type of national register we have in mind. Indeed, to the extent that name-like identifiers are created by individuals and need to be periodically renewed from generation to generation, the kind of codification which enables these identifiers to function as quasi-names does indeed differ from the code books of traditional societies. It is more useful to think of the national census listing of identifiers in terms of an imaginary permanent newspaper which reports every new emergence as a piece of news

and whose files preserve these items for a reasonably long period over which they remain relevant. The newspaper is modern society's equivalent of the traditional *samhitaa*. Both the newspaper and the *samhitaa* codify. They both initiate and preserve the validity of the most significant designations (names) functioning in the speech community that they serve.

It is in the context of this nexus that names, codes, and news are thematically interdependent. In order to understand codes better, in the following section we shall look at the transition from *samhitaa*-type codes to news-oriented codes – from ancientism to the valorization of modernity – in terms of the concepts of Archive and Arcade.

5. Archives and Arcades

5.1. The Transition

It is important to note that we are not speaking of a straightforward transition from archives to arcades. Let me explain what sort of distinction between two types of traditions is sought to be made by calling one kind 'archives' and the other kind 'arcades'. The question of archival traditions still looms large in the contemporary context. Likewise, although not quite at the same level of importance, there was something like an arcade issue in classical societies whenever an individual author put his stamp on a set of words and phrases marking his distinctive contribution to the culture. We are suggesting that archives are dominant in traditional cultures, while the arcade is a major force in modern textual formations and partly overshadows the archive.

While there is no transition from archives to arcades at the level of the very existence of these phenomena, we do wish to say that there is a transition from archival or *samhitaa*-type codes to arcade-like, news-oriented codes at the level of the notional registration of identifiers. This transition occurs in connection with a familiar shift in the distribution of social power.

5.2. The Source of Authority

The canonical source of authority in traditional societies was the king or some equivalent central figure. The king's registers,

typically drawn from priesthood or some other body of professional intellectuals, represented his central authority and served as a collective register. This registrar embodied the right to preserve old identifiers and promulgate new ones. This authority was thus continuous with monarchical sovereignty in general. We see here the all pervasive centralization that marks the traditional model of social power. What held for all other forms of power also held for the power to identify. Sovereignty over all namings and all preservations of names vested in the king in principle, through the agency of the collective registrar responsible for maintaining the notional total register of all designations and identifiers.

5.3. Changes in Codifiers

Republican societies vest such authority in the public constituted as a senate. But this leaves the centralistic organization of power untouched if, as in republican Rome, an oligarchy capable of functioning consensually replaces the individual monarch but does not open up the space of power. Only the growth of democracy and of the socio-economic forces underpinning it brings about a crisis in the old regime. Out of such a crisis arises a modern structure of power. This new structure attaches great value to the innovative proposals emanating from non-central, non-ossified regions of the society. In order to maximize the dissemination and positive reception of such innovations, modern societies recast their rationality in a decentralizing direction. They permit the principle of continuity to remain in the form of law books and gazetteers and other standard codifications. But modern societies give newspapers and other periodical publications – including textbooks, which become increasingly tentative and updateable files rather than stable books in the old sense – nearly unlimited power to supplement and modify the content of the standard codifications.

It is here that the arcade where all proponents advertise their identifiers and products manages to overshadow the traditional archive. This overshadowing, while it does not destroy the archive's existence, decisively alters the type of codifications characteristic of the society. Books were the basic codifiers in traditional cultures which honoured old age. Newspapers and other journals become the basic codifier in modern cultures which cherish youth.

5.4. Records

Suppose we use the term *Records* when we speak neutrally, spanning the range of societies from traditional to modern. *Records* may then be a set of archives with a tiny bit of arcade material, or alternatively a gallery of arcades overshadowing some surviving archives.

We may then say that any given term in a language – and, specifically, and neologism or other linguistic innovation – derives its particular semantic charge in the context of the echoes and counter echoes which the item evokes in the collection of *Records* available in that language. It is then immediately obvious that there will be an equivalent for the semantic charge of an item when one translates. For the TL *Records* will offer a different set of reverberations incapable of echoing the echoes and counter-echoes surrounding the original item in the SL. It follows that no neologism is strictly translatable, and that no TL neologism can strictly correspond to an ordinary SL term that calls for an innovation in the TL because there is no TL equivalent for that term. The point is of course trivially valid even for non-innovative or ordinary expressions. But it is quite forcefully so when we deal with terms and usages that are new and thus draw attention to their form and sense. If such attention-catching items are especially violative of the equivalence norms we expect in translation, then we have a problem that needs to be faced. And it interacts with the Translation Novelty Paradox that we started out with.

5.5. The Contradiction

This interaction has to do with the form that the problem takes in societies with a news-oriented codification system, where arcades have already become dominant or are fast becoming so. In these technicalized societies, neologisms live in an especially tight symbiosis with other ephemerally circulating items in the specific news world of a given region in a particular period. It would on the face of it seem completely impossible to transplant such a life form from one habitat to another. This gives us a spectacular version of the problem, leading us to ask how, under these conditions, the translation enterprise remains viable at all. For it would seem that

much of a text would generally have to be fatally new, doing such violence to the TL codes and their expectations that the result of any translation attempt would inevitably be completely out of tune with audience assumptions and thus unintelligible, a non-text in the TL. This way of putting the problem is in touch with the Translation Novelty Paradox. For we must remember that, in the face of all this, the facts of the voluminous enterprise say to us, in the words of Galileo Galilei, *e pur si muove* ('and yet [the earth] moves [round the sun']). How is it that the impossible happens, and happens all the time? This is what makes the question a paradox, an apparent contradiction.

5.6. Intertranslatability

We can consider the issue first in the context of the group of languages forming the core of the successful translation enterprise in the modern period, the mutually translatable languages of the industrialized world. For English, French, German, Russian and other languages belonging to this group – not all of them genetically related, for Hungarian and Finnish fall with this core as well – the paradox can be resolved by nothing that the shared cultural archive puts all these languages on essentially the same map and enables them to overcome difficulties of transferring thematic reverberations during translation. These languages have mutual translation traditions. Their translators are used to coping with these difficulties.

For these intertranslatable languages, then, the problem dissolves to the extent that the interarchival gap has been bridged by an already existing cultural overlap and a large body of translations exerting a gravitational pull on new translated texts.

Intertranslatable languages are associated with industrialization. They have all moved into the news-oriented type of codification of the Records. Their arcades are in dialogue with each other. And their archives have long been rooted in shared histories. The difficulty is not acute in practice.

A much less tractable version of the issue arises for the languages of developing countries. To these we now turn.

6. Less Equipped Languages

Many languages used in the developing countries have properties that make it useful to distinguish MELs (More Equipped Languages) from LELs (Less Equipped Languages). They are in the process of developing registers and terminological repertoires which will enable them to join the group intertranslatable modern languages, often with active state intervention of the type described as 'language planning'. For our immediate purposes, it is important to notice that in a LEL one expects large amounts of novelty on a routine basis, as most of the modern diction is supposed to sound new.

6.1. Translationese

This situation alters the premises of the Translation Novelty Paradox. In a LEL, there is no requirement that new entrants into the set of acceptable texts should exhibit any real continuity with the existing traditions so as to sound natural. Much can and will be written in a diction that will sound like 'translationese', without protest from the public. For the public wishes to catch up with the developed world, and accepts translationese as one of the costs of this endeavour.

The problem of translating from a MEL into a LEL, as far as neologisms are concerned, must be viewed in this context. Given the language planning enterprise and the presence of large amounts of routine innovation in such a TL, it becomes appropriate to describe the innovations in terms of a consciously and centrally authorized Archive. Such a language has no serious Arcade associated with it. It has too thick a historical layer of individual innovation admired and fraternally supported by other individuals – the kind of layer that underwrites the Arcade in industrialized societies. All that a LEL can do is mimic the Arcade by using the resources that its new, rapidly created Archive of official coinages makes available.

6.2. An Ad Hoc Solution

The current global mingling of newspaper material (I am offering no specific treatment of the cyberspace nature of this

mingling here) produces an ad hoc solution to this problem. The globalized consumerism of the middle class yields a rather low quality but highly disseminated cultural overlap which ensures a base line of mutual translatability in terms of widely known products and activities. Thanks to this base, even LELs can come up with viable short term equivalents for at least the journalistic input from MEL societies that has to be translated on a regular basis. Consumerism serves as a reference culture making most of the material intelligible. This solution amounts to a wholesale import of arcades. But it leaves the basic issues unaddressed. Linguistic innovation in the developing languages continues to be centrally authorized or monitored, because of the hierarchical structures of developing societies. Thus the Archive in these communities continues to overshadow the Arcade, producing a potentially explosive instability in the domains of innovation. Even the contemporary wholesale import of the alien arcades is a centrally controlled and hierarchically sponsored initiative that can only reinforce the strength of the Archive's unity vis-à-vis the Arcade's multiplicity. Whether the forces of real creative innovation will succeed in finding a mode of expressing themselves, breaking through this authoritarian, elite-managed enterprise of copying foreign novelties – this issue concerns us all. Translators cannot afford to be neutral on this issue. For translation undertakes in general to minimize opacity and maximize transparency for the benefit of true self-expression and its dissemination. We must discharge this responsibility.

6.3. Classification of Neologisms

For our purposes, then, we need to adopt a classification of SL neologisms that keeps in view the appropriateness of dealing with them in particular ways when translating into a LEL. That is the burden of this section. Here is our classification:

- (a) Name-based neologisms remain new as long as they retain the connection with what is perceived as a name. In this sense, '*stakhanovite*' is a neologism even in our period, after the death of Stalinism and the near-oblivion of the *Stakhanovite* ideal of socialist workaholism. In contrast, "academic" is no longer a neologism or a name-based word,

even though it did originate in a name when Plato founded his Academy. The treatment of (a)-type neologisms will depend on the method of translation adopted and the purpose that the translated text is intended for. It will also depend on the familiarity of the relevant name in the relevant LEL culture. Our task in translation studies is to alert the translator to types of recurrent problems, not to offer formulaic recipes. In general, one will want to treat "academic" as a timeless notion and "*Stakhanovite*" as a whimsically specific locution for 'hard-working labourer'. But a text focusing on Stalin's era will want to refer to biographical details about the heroically productive worker Stakhanov whom the Soviet system had held up as an example to be emulated. (b) Name-making neologisms like '*glasnost*', arising from occasions on which someone is able to recharge a normal word in a language and turn it into a name for a specific event or phenomenon, again pose a problem of judgment. If one is dealing with an event or phenomenon that has become or is capable of becoming common currency as a name in many countries, like *glasnost*, then it makes sense to transcribe the SL expression and treat it as a name in the TL. More often, one will have to find a sense equivalent in the target LEL and let the text do the work of showing the audience that the neologism is name like. A case of this sort is "generative grammar", a name-making neologism in English that has consistently been sense-translated, never transcribed, into other languages, with results ranging from *sanjononi beakoron* in Bangla to *vyutpaadak vyakaranx* in Konkani. (c) Portmanteau neologisms like *workaholic* or *affluenza* sometimes start out as jokes, and during that period may elicit TL jokes from translators, like *porisromaataal* in Bangla blending *porisrom* 'work' with *maataal* 'drunk'. But words of this type which survive in the SL become standard pieces of natural language and have to be given more stable equivalents. Thus a second generation Bangla word for workaholic would be something like *kaajpaagol* 'work-mad', an expression already used in ordinary texts. (d) Affixal neologisms formed by attaching affixes to existing bases and

producing unusual combinations, like the word *metadiscourse*, can often be mimicked in a target LEL. Thus, if we agree to use *baacokotaa* in Bangla for 'discourse' and *odhi* for 'meta', as far as the rest of the terminological system is concerned, then it automatically follows that the appropriate expression for metadiscourse is *odhibaacokotaa*. If tomorrow a neologism "immigrantism" emerges to express the idea that all people are to be described as immigrants, then the existing Bangla expression *obhibaasi* 'immigrant' with the affix baad 'ism' will underwrite the new expression *obhibassibaad*. Affixes like meta and ism are easy. It is catch-all affixes like the prefix "de" that create problems. Recent writings in Bangla point up the difficulty of handling cases like deconstruction and decolonization. The natural equivalent for the former would be *binirmaan*. But one crucial terminologist was persuaded, apparently by a Sanskrit-erudite colleague, to avoid a collision with the Sanskrit word *vinirmaanxa* 'exquisite and careful construction'. Thus Bangla writings on the subject are divided between that terminologist's proposal *abinirmaan* and the other authors' choice *binirmaan*, a head-on collision within the language. and the mechanically derivable *buponibeshon* ,for 'decolonization', using as it does the initial sequence *bupo* corresponding to *vy-upa* from Sanskrit, is phonologically opaque in Bangla and does not sound like a 'de'-word. One way out might be *niruponibeshon*, but one would have to try it and see if the community accepts it. In general, there is no panacea that works for all cases. (e) Semantic neologisms, cases of existing expressions acquiring new senses, poses a problem if translators try to extend corresponding expressions into new semantic domains inexactly similar ways in the TL. One would be hard put to mimic the extension of the English adjective "explicit" from the articulate expression sense to the sense of film screen non-concealment of sexuality which became common in the West in the sixties and seventies. The solution is perhaps not even to try. For 'explicit scene' one would then say in Bangla *anaabrito drishho* (literally 'non-covered scene') and not

bother about the unusual locution used to refer to that type of sequence in English. (f) Collocational neologisms, involving new combinations of words or new senses for combinations already available, often pose problems for the translator if the TL already has another set of connotations for what would be the normal TL equivalent. Thus, if the German Greens lead a revolution, drastically changing the politics and culture of Central Europe, it will not be appropriate to describe such an event as a green revolution in Indian English or as a *shobuj biplab* in Bangla, for these terms are already laden with the historical specificity of the revolutionary introduction of high yield seed varieties in Indian agriculture in the sixties. Perhaps an expression like the Green's Revolution or *shobujder biplab* will manage to convey the sense of a revolution led by the Greens. (g) Acronyms and abbreviations proper, to turn at last to the topic that has crucially shaped our approach to the overall issue, often pose a difficulty at the very first stage of the translator's attempt to handle a text, in that we often fail to understand a new abbreviation or acronym even in a domain we may otherwise be familiar with. It is important to keep in touch with handbooks, periodicals, and the community of colleagues in the domain so that one can get help in deciphering these unidentified frustrating objects.

The next question – how to present the material in the TL – has to do with the habits one's audience has and the new ones you want them to acquire. Bangla speakers do use acronyms, as in the nineteenth century saint Sri Ramakrishna saying as he comes out of a gathering where one has to leave one's footwear at the door: *ju aa naa ge?*, short for *juto aache naa geche?* ‘Are our sandals still there or are they gone?’ But one prefers to refer to WHO ‘World Health Organization’ in Bangla as “*Bishsho Shaastho Shangsthaa*”, not by using an acronym like “*Bi-shshaa-sh*” which would converge with the homophonous word “*bishshaash*” which means ‘faith, belief’, the kind of convergence Westerners seem to like for their acronyms. Translators who wish to strive for transparent communication need to respect such preferences in the TL

community, unless they know of any reasons for initializing a drastic reform in the audience's habits.

7. Changing the TL

The single most potent source of changes in vocabulary and diction in the developing languages in the neologisms produced and reproduced by journalists functioning as translators. Working under high pressure, these translators who often have no translation training and certainly no knowledge of language planning theory are forced to respond immediately to the problem of finding equivalents for English expressions pouring into the newsroom, expressions for which Less Equipped Languages have no standard equivalents.

As education becomes a powerful instrument of social change, a second important source will be school and college textbooks in LELs, supplemented by other academic publications. Again, the strategy of authors producing such material is often to translate from English.

Journalists, educators, and other less powerful translators will decide for each community of this sort to what extent existing styles and registers will change to adjust to the prevalent patterns of innovations in the MELs. The translators cannot, of course, make any unilateral moves. Their proposals are at the disposal of the public which accepts and rejects them along unpredictable lines (but see Anita, forthcoming). It is thus a consultative, community-wide process that ensures real application of rationality norms in term planning.

The pressures of modern life described above which make abbreviation a powerful general tendency also encourage such translators, and the public which has a filtering effect on their work, to import acronyms like UNICEF and UNESCO directly into other languages, especially LELs. Likewise, scientific and technical notations consisting of (or incorporating) various types of abbreviation tends to be carried over into LELs with little or no modification.

Under these conditions, it is an open question whether terminological committees and institutions of the sort sponsored by

typical third world governments and advised by linguists and professional translators can do anything worthwhile by creating vocabularies in the usual fashion. The work done by such bodies exerts a great influence on the diction of journalists and textbook writers, and through them on the general public, despite various filter-effects. In other words, term planning of the committee variety does help. However, such planned vocabularies cannot cope with the fast pace of change and innovation in many domains. Committees work slowly and on the basis of consensus. They tend to put senior persons from humanities disciplines and literature backgrounds in key positions. Such figures impose their overall taste on the output of these committees. This taste is consistently conservative and favours the archive approach, tending to neglect or not even to understand the imperative of the arcades of our modern societies.

Under these conditions, since there is no known way to change the composition of term planning committees or the style of the humanities disciplines in LEL speech communities, and since therefore the standard handbooks ultimately controlled by such authorities will act as a brake on the development of a modern diction, translators need to learn how to use their own judgment and make spontaneous decisions that strengthen the forces of innovation in LELs.

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Translating Mantras

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Even at their best, translations of classical texts barely succeed in capturing the verbal meaning of the original. But being reader - rather than listener-directed, they silence their sound. Translations into modern languages attempt to convey the classical text's 'phonocentricism' to the reader's 'scriptocentric' sensibility. Though worlds do not fall into Walter J Ong's neat 'oral aural'/literate model, translation from classical languages essentially involves carrying their phonocentric message across to a scriptocentric receiver. This happens even in electronically recorded versions. Translation of orally patterned thought into the structure of textuality converts sound to the letter. This violates phonocentric cultures' investment in sound and the relationship of the acoustic sign with meaning. The emphasis on the interdependence of the word and the referent in phonocentric cultures challenges the basic assumptions of modern linguistic theory. In contrast to Structural Linguistics that highlights the arbitrariness of the sign, the phonocentric word reveals the inseparability of sign and meaning. This paper will relate problems of classical translation to the difference in the perception of the sign in phonocentric and scriptocentric cultures.

The perceptual difference begins with the status of the word in traditional cultures. Word does not need to be sacralized as *mantra* or sacred word. It is inherently sacred both as *shabda* or sound and *akshara* or letter. It cannot be an empty sign, a mere communicational tool transmitting an idea by nature but the embodiment of the idea. The following paean to Speech, underlining its pre-eminence in Vedic phonocentrism, is an initiation into fundamental cultural differences in the perception of the word.

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I am the queen, the confluence of riches, the skilful one who is first among those worthy of sacrifice. The gods divided me up into various parts, for I dwell in many places and enter into many forms. (*Rig Veda* 10.125.3.)

The word *Vac* is the essence of Being. It fills a certain lack in Being who has no name and cannot exist except as being-in-itself. "Vac is really the total living Word, that is to say, the Word in her entirety, including her material aspects, her cosmic reverberation, her visible form, her sound, her meaning, her message."

The Word, imperishable, is the Firstborn
Of Truth, mother of the Veda and hub of
immorality. May she come to us in
happiness in the sacrifice! May she,
our protecting Goddess, be easy of
entreaty!

Word as sign and word as Being reflect entirely different modes of consciousness. The word as logos is the manifestation of Being, or its *naam rupa* (name, *naam* and form, *rupa*). The word, pre-existing Being, creates Being in a pre-Whorfian sense.

I gave birth to the father on the head of this world. My womb is in the waters, within the ocean. Even there I spread out over all creatures and touch the very sky with the crown of my head. (*Rig Veda* 10.125.7)

As Panniker argues, "the meaning of *Vac* is an interplay of the multiple dimensions of the word, as breath, as sound, as meaning and so on". *Vac* mediates in a very different manner than the structuralist sign. Its mediation is not confined to the object and its meaning. *Vac* is required to mediate between the mind, *manas*, and *prana*, life force, or body, *kaya* partaking the features of both. The word's mediation at his level regulates purity and control of speech. Word is not an arbitrary label or tag but a name rich with meaning. The act of naming here is to know the named object intimately and invest it with a certain quality. The translator, habituated to word as a sign, a mere tool, is awed into silence by the word as Being. The intrepid translator confronts not "the thorny wall of an ancient and

cryptic language" but an *alaukik* or 'unearthly' language the world revealed itself in.

Its unearthly language provides a lead to the word's authorship. If the word pre-existed creation, as it is sometimes believed, the question of authorship becomes doubly contested. The word without an author, *apurusheya*, turns the concept of mediation inside out. The authorless word is revealed to multiple receivers and is ultimately transcribed. If the word, as the first-born, is primordial, it must seek a human medium through which it must express itself and man made complete. Whether authorless or with a divine authorship, the sacred word cannot be tracked back or measured against an original authorial intention. Who is the final word on the accuracy of translated mantras?

Though word as sound 'indicates the presence of a speaker', which will be elaborated during the discussion on the stress on purity of delivery, the focus appears to shift from the speaker to the receiver and to the mode of reception. The word is not only 'received' but is defined by its reception. This includes the sensory organs involved in reception, the physical and the psychological conditions of reception, and the fitness and suitability of the receiver. Though the words' receivers are named *mantradrashta*, those to whom it has been revealed, the ear rather than the eye is its channel. The word is received through the ear as vibrations produced on the tympanum through the production of certain sounds. Only certain ears, those of the seers, whose spiritual and moral purity makes them suitable receptacles, receive the word. When transmitted to other ears, the unbroken flow from the *guru's* mouth to the *shishya's* ear ensures minimal distortion. It also enjoins upon the *guru* the status of its custodian as well as the responsibility to test the receivers' suitability. The knowledge of the word is *shruti*, or 'that is heard'. The word exists as sound in *shruti* wisdom. Its insistence on the ear as the sole mode of reception comes from the perceived link between hearing and understanding. The word exists in and is transmitted through the body. Written translation begins by disregarding the basic injunction about the preservation and transmission of the word. Word as sound eludes translation for the sounds of two languages rarely commensurate. With its meaning inseparable from sound, its verbal meaning cannot

exist independent of sound. In non-literate cultures, therefore, it is virtually impossible to think of the word as a tag coming after the sound. As Ong points out, the separation of sign and meaning, the notion of word as label, is possible only when it exists outside the body as an orthographic symbol. Translators wishing to bring "the treasure of a tiny, exclusive group" to non-Vedists must realize that certain aspects of the text will remain hidden. The translator's concern with readability engages with the complexity of decoding an archaic idiom ignoring this aspect altogether.

Arthashreya, the word as the shelter of meaning, posits an identity of word and meaning that invalidates semiotic theory of the sign. Meaning is the product not of the relational difference but inheres in the sound. Unlike the sign where the signifier and the signified are united through an arbitrary link, the sound of the *shabda* 'points to the idea of the object' because of its inseparability from the artha, or meaning. This logically leads to the conclusion that the word's meaning can be expressed through specific sound combinations. Translation must reproduce verbal meaning in another language using the same combination of sounds. This is the key to a skilful translation whether in an Indian vernacular or an alien language.

O *Prajapati*, lord of progeny, no one but you embraces all these creatures. Grant us the devices for which we offer you oblation. Let us be lord of riches. (*Rig Veda* 10.121.1)

Neither its Hindi transliteration nor the English transcreation succeeds in reproducing the magic of sound. The English version, if anything, is closer to the spirit.

An introduction to the science of sounds, *Shabdavigyan*, can aid understanding of the way sounds are believed to work. Traditional science of sound postulates that meaning produced as an effect of sound is experienced as vibrations in the body. The vibration theory of sounds corresponds to modern scientific theory, which differentiates sounds in terms of frequencies. The strictures governing mode of transmission, correctness of pronunciation, breath control voice modulation, right intonation come together in the theory of sound effects underlying the *shruti* system. Phonocentricism approaches its limits in suggesting routes to

'liberation by sound', *anavriti shabdat*. The privileging of the reproduction of sound effect over understanding verbal meaning is reflected in chants being recommended even to those who have no knowledge of their meaning. Translation, on the other hand, subordinates aural message to the verbal message thus splitting the *mantra's* wholeness. Since verbal meaning is designed to produce certain effects on the body and consciousness through sounds and sound combinations, even the most accurate translation of verbal meaning accomplishes a fraction of the job.

The link of the *mantra's* sound and meaning to its effect on the individual and cosmic consciousness must be kept in mind. The *mantric* composition incorporates four phases of sound, which must in turn be experienced at different points in the consciousness. *Shruti's* mode of transmission logic is complicated through the multiple points at which the word is received to engender different effects. The vibrations caused on the typanum through oral transmission are diffused through different points resulting in different phases of reception. Experienced separately as word and meaning in the first two, *vaikhari* and *madhyama*, it transmutes into a visual experience in *pashyanti*, and culminates in the union of the signifier and of the signified in the para consciousness. Initiated as a sensory experience, it transcends to a super sensory perception. Written translations, that divorce the verbal from the aural meaning, reflect the word and object split of the first two phases. Liberation of sound is the prerogative of the non-literate listener open to its mystic message, whereas the reader must rest content with an intellectual understanding. The translated text, therefore, decontextualizes the *mantra* by considering its meaning independent of its function.

In another dimension, word as sound 'indicates the presence of a speaker'. But strictures on correctness and purity of delivery as laid out in *Shiksha* flow from the theory of sound vibrations. *Shiksha* is evidence of a highly developed knowledge of phonetics in Vedic culture. The onus of ensuring that sounds produce appropriate effects, however, shifts to the speaker. Proper effects of mantras made contingent upon correct intonation, pronunciation, pitch and pace control, breath regulations ensure the purity of the original sound with no erosion. Word as sound cannot be captured

as writing because certain Vedic sounds fall between syllables and defy orthographic transcription. *Shiksha* phonetics is not a description but a prescription of sounds that lays down rules for correct intonation. The production of sound is more intimately related with breathing and particular articulators than, say, English phonetics. Chest breathing is also rejected as shallow compared through navel breathing with the breath travelling upwards in complicated patterns through different points before escaping through the mouth. Breath or *prana*, is related to the emotions produced at different pulse centres. Rules about articulators, force and duration in sound production are equally rigid in *shabda* yoga. Paanineeya *Shiksha* spells out clear rules of enunciation. The anecdote about *Tvashta* illustrates the importance of correct intonation. All this reveals Sanskrit as the embodiment of *shabdabrahmaatmaka*, the image of sound, which is the soul of the infinite.

The Vedic corpus defies all attempts at containment and explanation by Western theory. Preserving pristine sounds verbatim, they do not reveal the homeostasis they see in non-literate cultures. Classifying them as proto-literate cultures does not solve the problem either. Though controlled by the chosen, even literates memorize them in non-literate fashion. Vedic recitation turns Ong's thesis on its head by proving that verbatim preservation is possible without reference to a written text. It offers a fascinating example of an error free method of preservation without resort to writing through the many safeguards. The 'taboo' about the fullest benefit of Vedas accruing only if no word is changed is a foolproof method of maintaining accuracy. Ong's view of formulaic language and rhythm as mnemonic aids explains oral style exclusively in terms of a knowledge preservation system. He ascribes the stress on the development of memory to an anxiety about erosion of knowledge. He also attributes the conservatism of non-literate knowledge to the same need. Ironically, both systems privilege their own mode of transmission dismissing the other as a mechanical archival tool. The Vedic formulae, compounding and rhythms cannot be reduced to a memory retrieval system. The Platonic distinction between good and bad memory applies to the adherence to the spoken mode in transmitting *shruti* wisdom. Writing, as Plato had found out, as a

mechanical tool of preservation is bad memory or rememoration. The spoken word, as a living presence, embodies good memory for memorization leads to understanding. The insistence that the word be received aurally is aimed at the development of a real memory rather than mechanical repetition. It is one thing to look at rules concerning mantra recitation as mnemonic aids and another to embed them in a quasi-mystical system. At the production end too, sound must be capable of awakening four different phases at different pulse centres. When the word is received aurally, neither sound nor delivery can be separated from verbal meaning. Protoliteracy is an inadequate term to explain Vedic transmission for it continues to be transmitted orally even in conditions of near complete literacy. Authorized transmission of the guru *shishya parampara* personalizes knowledge in the guru's body, who might pass it one to a worthy receiver through a similar social interaction. Phonocentric cultures regard the dialectical method as a more reliable method of understanding for it provides the learner the opportunity to seek clarifications. Positing authority in a person rather than a text that cannot be challenged in person, invites debate on every issue. Authorized transmission is an example of undemocratic script, is also responsible transmission. The spoken text might be possessed by anyone as the written one can be and its audience is always real.

"The Word is not only speech, though constitutively connected with it; it is also intelligibility, the principle of reason, the power of the intellect, the rational structure of reality."

Translation As Literary Criticism- Text and Sub-text in Literary Translation

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A general theory of literary translation between two or more languages that can explain or anticipate the problems of linguistic and cultural transfer of meanings and set standards of evaluation, appears a near impossibility, given the large number of variables the process of translation has to contend with. However, certain principles for evaluating the nature and function of translations in the Indian context between Indian languages and English need to be formulated. During the last decade, a large number of literary translations from modern Indian languages into English have appeared. Do they constitute the national archives of 'Indian Literature'? Do the translations emphasize the local, the regional or the national? Do the processes of translation into trans-regional languages like English reconstitute a literary work from a modern Indian language? When a European or Latin American text is translated into a modern Indian language, does its 'truth value' suffer erosion? Do separate strategies of translation produce different texts?

I shall confine myself largely to translations between Malayalam and English, though some examples would come from other sources. If one examines the role played by translation in the Malayalam literary history, one is struck by its critical function in the projection of new horizons of expectations. The standardization of literary language itself took place through translation. The publication of original novels in Malayalam was preceded by translations of various prose narratives. Realistic fiction as well as modernist poetry was accompanied by a large number of translations from various European, African, American and Latin American languages. During the period between 1900 and 1975, of the 3367 novels published in Malayalam, 344 were translations. That works out to be 11.5%. In the last decades this figure must

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have marginally grown, as there is growing demand for translated fiction. Of the 2031 books translated under the category of literature 909 are from foreign languages, while 1122 are from Indian languages. The break-up for foreign languages is as follows: English (401), Russian (229), French (115) and German (30). The bulk of translations from Indian languages are from Sanskrit (540), Bengali (266) and Hindi (157). Of late, translations of contemporary writings from Kannada and Tamil have begun to appear in large numbers.

A careful examination of these translations suggests a deeper pattern. Translations from foreign languages are dictated by the shifts in literary sensibility. Often a new literary sensibility uses translations as a means of breaching the hegemony of the prevailing orthodoxies. The translation of Victor Hugo's *Les Miserables* in 1925 marked a breakthrough in fiction as it prepared the readers for representation of lower class life and social conflicts. The larger number of translations from Maupassant, Anatole France, Chekhov, Dostoevsky and other European masters of fiction made no concession to the prevailing literary taste. In fact, they could be described as foreignizing translations as they disrupted the cultural codes that prevailed in Malayalam in the 30s and the 40s. The function of these translations was to make available to the society alternate models of thinking and imagining the world. It is significant that very little is translated from Anglo-American literature into Malayalam. English serves as source language or medium for translation as it has large number of translations from other European languages and also from African or Latin-American literature. The literary translations that intervene in culture and project alternative strategies of reading and writing, in effect, function as literary criticism as they force open the very boundaries of what is considered 'literary'.

Here, it may be instructive to distinguish translation as literary criticism from literary translations that reinforce prevailing literary taste. Novels from Bengali, and to lesser extent from some other Indian languages, appear regularly in Malayalam translation. The first Bangla novel to appear in Malayalam was *Anand Math* by Bankim Chandra Chatterjee, in 1909. This was followed by

Durgeshnandini in 1911. Most of the Bangla authors are available in Malayalam translations: Tagore (50 books), Sharat Chandra Chatterjee (48 books), Divijendralal Roy (40 books), Bankim Chandra Chatterjee (30 books). Several of these novels were serialized in Malayalam periodicals, something not done from other Indian languages. While Hindi serves as a medium or source language for many of these Indian languages including Bangla, Hindi literature has not really attracted the imagination of Malayalam readers. Translations from Sanskrit have increased in recent years, as there is a revival of interest on classical heritage. This kind of translation cannot be described as literary as a large number of texts such as the Upanishads or the Vedas are not chosen for their literary value alone. Here I would like to argue that translations from other Indian languages into Malayalam do not function as literary criticism. With the possible exception of Tagore, these translations have not resulted in a revision of taste and model for writing in the literary field. The large number of Bangla novels that appear in Malayalam fulfill the demand for popular reading material for the middle class readers. The reason why these translations read like Malayalam may have something to do with the shared values and commonness of perceptions. Here the Bangla texts are reconstituted in the target language of Malayalam in accordance with 'values, beliefs and representations that pre-exist' in Malayalam. What they confirm is the world-views that are obtained in the social novels of Malayalam. The Bangla text does not become a means of destabilizing existing literary value systems.

Domesticating translations become ways of reinforcing certain subject positions already available in a speech community. A good example of this is Malayalam translation of Shivaji Savant's *Mrityunjaya* with the title *Karnan* in 1995. The context of this translation was the extraordinary popularity of M.T.Vasudevan Nair's *Randamoozham* (*The Second Turn*), which revisits the *Mahabharat* from Bhim's perspective. *Mrityunjaya*, and this is also true of Khandekar's *Yayaati*, is not received as a Marathi novel but as one of the possible rewritings of the epic story. The translation was not done from Marathi original but from its Hindi translation. The poetics of Malayalam already constituted by indigenous cultural history, reading habits and works like *Bharataparyatanam*,

Eni Jnanuraangatte, Karnabhooshanam is reactivated and confirmed by these translations. They result in validating an exciting poetics. Since the *Mahabharat* has already been in circulation in various versions and is a cultural text of great significance any subversive rewriting will be resisted by the existing value systems. In this sense *Karnan* is not a new text but an endorsement of the canonical status of the *Mahabharat* as a cultural text. As far as I am aware play like *Andha-Yug* by Dharmavir Bharati has not been translated into Malayalam. Its translation is not likely to enjoy wide readership.

In the light of the above discussion we are in a position to say that all literary translations do not have a critical function. For translation to perform the role of literary criticism, the language should already have a clearly defined literary field with its own internal dynamics. To use Pierre Bourdieu's term, only when a field of cultural production is well established in a speech community, translated texts can accomplish the critical function which, to a great extent, may be subversive in its orientation. Bourdieu writes:

..the social microcosm that I call the literary field is a space of objective relationships among positions...and one can only understand what happens there if one locates each agent or each institution in its relationships with all the others. It is this peculiar universe, this 'Republic of Letters', with its relations of power and its struggles for the preservation or the transformation of the established order, that is the basis for the strategies of producers, for the form of the art they defend, for the alliances they form, for the schools they found, in short, for their specific interests.

We shall come back to this inclusive view of literary field to review translation as cultural production.

In his study of the German reading public, A. Ward suggests that the average middle class reader prefers works which are 'within his own experience and range of emotion, reflecting his own interests and not conflicting with the demands of his morality'. The idea of foreignizing translation implies certain translating strategies. These strategies operate in a culture where various centres of power

exist simultaneously. These centres of power organize discourses by canonizing or marginalizing them. Schleiermacher who in 1813 advocated foreignizing translation recognized the fact that this kind of literary translation could flourish only in languages which were "freer, in which innovations and deviations are tolerated to a greater extent, in such a way that their accumulation may, under certain circumstances, generate a certain characteristic mode of expression".

Lawrence Venuti has commented that Schleiermacher's concept of foreignizing translation is marked by 'bourgeois individualism, cultural elitism, Prussian Nationalism and German universalism'. What is pertinent to our discussion is that what is foreign in a foreignizing translation performs a revisionary act within the target language. Since these translation strategies recover or reassemble discourses from within the target language, they reconstitute literary discourse. It was pointed out above that Malayalam rarely translates texts from Anglo-American culture. The foreignizing translations in Malayalam can be seen to make a careful selection of foreign texts. Is there an attempt to resist the hegemony of English or at least the cultural values embroidered in Anglo-American texts? The literary discourses favoured by the middle-class and the working class reproduce the hegemony of the prevailing value system. In the choice of foreign texts and in their rendering into Malayalam in a manner which resists the hegemony of prevailing or popular taste, the elitist literary translation in Malayalam clearly address a chosen few, largely the creative writers in the language and those whose sensibility finds the existing cultural products limited and limiting.

(2)

One could make use of Pierre Bourdieu's idea of 'symbolic capital' for a clearer understanding of the critical function of translation. He argues that symbolic forms or symbolic systems of exchange cannot be set apart from other modes of practice in a society. Writers and translators are part of a complex institutional framework, which authorizes, enables, empowers and legitimizes them. Literary or artistic value is not the prerogative of every cultural product in a society. What Bourdieu describes as the field

of restricted cultural production, by virtue of its greater autonomy from the field of economic capital, is able to achieve greater symbolic value. The production of literary texts cannot be understood in terms of its internal structure alone. This applies to translated texts in a culture too. We need a larger view of cultural production that regulates and organizes texts in a literary field. As shown above, the choice of foreign texts for translation as well as the strategies of translation in Malayalam is dictated by the prevailing systems of power in its culture. In the case of Malayalam foreignizing translation deliberately restricts its addressivity to exclude the middle class readership, thus taking literary translation out of the orbit of mass culture. The organization of the field of culture into such segments is to be seen in the context of relations between culture and capital. The world of social differences is institutionalized in the fragmentation of cultural products. Translation as a cultural process cannot escape this larger fate of social hierarchies and divisions.

Translation is a contributing factor in the process of consecration and legitimization. Products of popular culture do not seek consecration as artistic products as they are mass-produced for economic gain. It is significant that novels, poetry or drama that are commercially successful in the west are not translated into Malayalam. The recent Nobel Prize for Naipaul has not resulted in any excitement about Naipaul's works. However, a well-known Latin American novel *Experanto* by Maria has appeared in Malayalam translation with great publicity and fanfare. A recent travelogue that describes Brazil, with special reference to its people and literature has been received very well. Most of the novels by Marquez are available in Malayalam. A volume of Latin American stories has just been published. This interest in Latin American literature does not extend to the common middle class reader. It is largely used to consecrate and legitimate a particular modernist or post-modern style that is yet to gain wide acceptability. In this sense, it is a part of cultural struggle between the marginal avant-garde and the entrenched elitist or highbrow writers. The space for symbolic goods is highly limited in any literary field and it is here that the conflict between heresy and orthodoxy is most intense. Translation is employed as a strategy to project a new writing style

or to legitimate a new avant-garde view of art. Andre Leffevere's distinction between conceptual grid and linguistic grid may be relevant here. When translation acts as literary criticism, it intervenes in the conceptual grid of a speech community.

(3)

The value or the meaning of translation thus can only be ascertained with reference to the entire field of literary production. The internal dialectic of its divisions directs and determines the reception of translation. The translated text is not only constituted by the strategies of translation from inside but also by the dialectic between the economic and the symbolic capital in the culture of the target culture. We have seen above that the entire field of cultural production that is fragmented into the elitist and the popular determines the translation of the creative literature into Malayalam. Does such a situation obtain for Indian Writing in English Translation? How are the literary works born of the historical and social context of a particular region received in Indian English context? I shall briefly discuss some of the questions by comparing the well-known Malayalam novel *Khassakkinte Itihasam* (1969) by O.V.Vijayan with its translation *The Legends of Khasak* (1991) by the author himself. While the original in Malayalam has gone through 28 reprints in the last 32 years, the translation in English has had only two impressions. In his 'Author's Note', O.V.Vijayan says:

It has been difficult translating this book. It is full of dense images of nature, old folk customs, evocations of caste differences, the rich play of dialects, all of which are difficult to render into English.

The nature of addressivity in the fictional text of *Khasak* undergoes a complete change in its translation. The Malayalam original uses a large number of speech genres that may be traced to the caste differences in the lively sub-culture of a rural locality situated in the interiors of Palghat that borders on Tamil Nadu. In his translation these dialects are rendered opaque and the caste differences are projected on to religious differences. In the second chapter titled "The Return" in the original, while describing the founding myth of Khasak, Vijayan writes:

The Ravuthars and the Ezhavas of Khasak offered regular prayers to the spirit of Sheikh living there.

(അവിടെ പാർത്തുപോന്ന ഷൈയ്യവിന്ദി
പ്രേതത്തെത്ത വസംക്കിലെ രാവുത്താമാരും
ഇഴചവരും ഉപാസിച്ചു പോന്നു)

(Pg 18. *Avide parthuponna Sheikhinde prethatte Khasakkile Ravuttanmarum Iizhavarum upaasichchu ponnu.*)

Vijayan's translation reads like this:

Both the Muslims and the Hindus of Khasak look upon the Sheikh as their protecting deity. (*Legends*, p 11)

The question of religious identity is not central to *Khasak* where the magic of legends, fables and myths weave a sacred realm of shared belief. *Khasak's* consciousness can accommodate contradictions without allowing them to erupt into violent conflict. What makes the original text polyphous is not merely the presence of proliferating dialects but the enactment of multi-voicedness of this community. In the sixth chapter titled "The Schools" (*Vidyaalayangal*) we have a scene where the villagers debate the conflicting positions of the *Mullah* who is opposed to the school and the young *Khazi* who is in favour of it. In their conversation we have these dialogues:

"The Sheikh's is the truth," they said."

"Then, is the Mollacka a lie?" they asked again.

"Mollacka is also truth."

"How can that be?"

"Truths are many."

This passage is crucial for the entire novel as it denies an essentialist view of reality. However, in translation this passage is rendered as follows:

"The Khazi's truth" they told themselves, "is the Sheikh's truth"

"If that be so," troubled minds were in search of certitude, "is the Mollacka the untruth?"

"He is the truth too"

"How is it so?"

"Many truths make the big truth"

The references to the 'troubled minds being in search of certitude' and 'many truths making the big truth' completely falsify the original. The dialogic nature of the original is turned into the monologic assertion of the translated text. This amounts to an ideological corruption of the original narrative. In his review of the translation N.S. Madhavan points out:

Vijayan not only rewrote the novel but did some writing also. He wrote the novel afresh in parts, selectively, choosing those areas where the authority of the day's political correctness is most domineering, namely sex and politics.

It is not merely a question of political correctness. By the time Vijayan came to translate *Khasak*, he was a changed person who had turned deeply spiritual. The transgressions of *Khasak* which made it a radical text in Malayalam could have well appeared pedantic and trivial in English where the realm of restricted production is largely occupied by apolitical, pan-Indian texts. This also brings a deeper problem of the subtexts here. The historical context of *Khasak* is Vijayan's own disenchantment with ideologies in general and communism in particular. The verbal energy of the original came from a celebration of the transient, the carnal and the physical. Vijayan radicalised the discourse of Malayalam fiction by problematizing the normative. The symbolic value of *Khasak* derives from its heretic function in Malayalam fiction. Now the problem with the translation into English is that no such slot in the realm of restricted cultural production exists in Indian English fiction for works translated from modern Indian languages. Indian Writings in English Translation do not constitute symbolic capital that can reconstitute what is literary. In the absence of such critical function, Vijayan's avant-garde text slides into a nameless limbo where its function is not critical but celebratory. It consecrates Vijayan as an Indian writer. *Khasak* becomes an Indian Macinda where everything happens in another time and place. In the absence

of social and political sub-texts, the translated text becomes the other of the original something which Vijayan would not have anticipated or even endorsed.

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Beyond the Literary and the Literal: A move towards Stylistic Equivalence

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Introduction:

It is a well-known fact that literary translation contributes a great deal to the cultural communication between speakers of different languages. However a literary text is not merely communication of information and therefore the translation of a literary text is unsuccessful if it solely aims at reproducing chunks of information from the original text. It is widely accepted that the style of a mature and distinguished author in a literary text manifests his consummate creativeness. It is important that the translation of a literary text should aspire to produce a certain impact on the reader by trying to reproduce the style of the original text. Translators and translation theorists have always been concerned with the evaluation of a translated work. It has often been said that a good translation is one which successfully renders the rhythm, the connotations and the rhetorical devices used in the source text. If we apply literary stylistics to examine a literary translation it will be noted that the stylistic analysis of the original text in terms of aesthetically and/or thematically motivated linguistic choice will enable the translators to be more sensitive to the artistic value of the original text and select functional equivalents in translating to achieve stylistic equivalence.

Due to her personal interest in the translation of creative fiction, the author of this paper will make a tentative exploration of stylistic equivalents in translation of modern Hindi fiction by analysing two English versions of a short story by Mannu Bhandari titled *NayakKhlnayak Vidushak* and discuss the deceptive equivalence in the two English versions so that we can find some solutions to the problems in fictional translation and some principles to help improve the translation.

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Stylistic Equivalence in Translation:

Equivalence has always been a kernel concept in literary translation. However it has also occupied a seat of controversy in translation research. Catford defines translation as the replacement of textual material in one language (SL) by equivalent textual material in another language (TL). He holds that the central problem of translation practice is that of finding TL translation equivalents. When discussing the nature of translating., Eugene Nida points out that translating consists in reproducing in the receptor language the closest natural equivalent of source-language message, first in terms of meaning and second in terms of style. He emphasizes that the translator must strive for equivalence rather than identity.

Peter Newmark put forward the notions of semantic translation and communicative translation, and offered principles for texts of different levels and types, which prove to be more adaptable than Nida's notion of dynamic equivalence. Conversely, let us investigate the counter-argument toward translation equivalence. Roman Jakobson points out that equivalence in difference is the cardinal problem of language and pivotal concern of linguistics. Similarly, Nida also argues that since no two languages are identical either in meaning given to corresponding symbols or in the way in which such symbols are arranged in phrases or sentences, it stands to reason that there can be no absolute correspondence between languages. Furthermore, Mona Baker suggests that we adopt the term equivalence for the sake of convenience because most translators are used to it, rather than because it has any theoretical status. She concludes that equivalence can usually be obtained to some extent, and is therefore always relative.

In short, it can be certain that equivalence has always been a relative notion. However, it is the ultimate goal that every translator must strive to accomplish. It is safe to state that the notion of equivalence is of positive significance in the study of translation theory and translation practice. In practice, western theorists not only consider equivalence as the standard for evaluating translation in macro dimensions but also as a yardstick for transferring

different types of texts and different levels of linguistic elements. Therefore, equivalence can still be our guideline in literary translation.

Reproduction of original style has also been the concern of western translation theorists. Popovic, in his definition of translation equivalence, distinguishes four types. Among them is stylistic equivalence, where the functional equivalence of elements in both original and translation aim at expressive identity with an invariant of identical meaning. How could one achieve stylistic equivalence in literary translation? As many scholars have verified, translators should be sensitive to the stylistic value of the original, or in other words be armed with literary stylistics. In a literary text thematic and aesthetic values are generated by linguistic forms, values which convey the author's vision, tone and attitude; which embody the mingling or shifting of points of view (e.g. through changes in register); which add to the affective or emotive force of the message; which contribute to characterization and make fictional reality function more effectively in the thematic unity. Although the effects can be locally identifiable, it is understood that linguistic features never function in isolation but in relation to each other, all contributing to the total meaning of the work, in fact the individual choices of words, syntax etc., which are selected from their paradigmatically-related alternatives in the linguistic form, are very often combined by the verbal artist into foregrounded or unique patterns which generate extra values or meanings by virtue of similarity (e.g. Parallelism) or contrast (e.g. that between direct and indirect speech). In literary discourse, stylistic values may simply reside in appropriate choices from the conventional usage or rules, to the extent of changing the code itself.

To sum up, we should bear in mind the aim of reproducing the stylistic effects in the target text, and try to achieve functional equivalence between two literary texts as phonological, lexical, syntactical and rhetorical levels. Thereby stylistic equivalence might be attained in thematic and aesthetic aspects. Since narrative fiction, comparatively speaking, is a special genre of literature, we should manage to achieve equivalence at the narrative level, viz. to fully transfer the style of the original in characterization, and in highlighting aesthetic or thematic significance.

A Contrastive Analysis of Two English Versions of Nayak, Khalnayak, Vidushak Based on Stylistic Equivalence

Literary Stylistics, an intermediary discipline between literary criticism and linguistics, aims at the investigation of thematically or aesthetically motivated linguistic choices. Therefore, applying literary stylistics to translation will sharpen the translator's sensitivity to the working of the language system, improve his/her understanding of the function of stylistic norm and deviant linguistic elements, and enhance his/her awareness of the stylistic value in literary texts. All the above virtues would help translators discern the writer's stylistic features due to thematically or/and aesthetically motivated choices, then try to make correspondent linguistic choice from target language. By this, functional equivalence or expressive identity might be achieved between the source text and the target text. Thereupon stylistic equivalence could be accomplished to a greater degree.

The following analysis will be carried out at different linguistic levels, aiming at investigation of whether or not thematically or aesthetically motivated linguistic form is represented in the two English versions, in other words, whether or not stylistic effects or values are realized in the translations.

Proper words in proper places marks the definition of a style. As a writer, Mannu Bhandari tries to achieve certain stylistic effects by the use of her meticulous diction. The story that we are going to analyse for the purpose of the present paper is titled *Nayak Khalnayak Vidushak*. The words that she has used in this particular story helps to reveal quite a lot about the social status of the characters, their emotional states, upbringing etc., many expressions are specific, exact to the context, and full of implications. The following are examples:

Nayika ka prasthan, ab khalnayika ke pravesh tak woh bilkul swatantra hai, swatantra aur mukta

Condillac version:

Exit the heroine. Now he was free till the entry of Ammaji, the villain. Freedom! Liberation!

Sah version:

Exit the heroine. He's now free, absolutely free and unfettered-till the villainess makes her entry.

In Hindi, the word *khaliyika* stands for the female counterpart of a villain. In the translation by Condillac the use of the word 'villain' cannot be considered as a proper equivalent of the word used in the source text, as it is not marked for gender. The word used by P.P. Sah in his version, i.e., villainess seems more appropriate. If we compare the two versions in the remaining part of the paragraph, it will be noted that Condillac's version is extremely literal with the use of the words 'freedom' and 'liberation' as lexical equivalents of *swatantra* and *mukta*. As a result of this literalness Condillac's translation falls flat in terms of stylistic effect whereas Sah has changed the original sentence structure to suit his purpose with the use of words 'free' and 'unfettered' as equivalents of *swatantra* and *mukta*. In spite of this change Sah has managed to achieve more in terms of effect, as it is successful in depicting the emotional state of the protagonist and his relief at being left alone and thus almost achieves the stylistic value of the original.

Another example:

"*amit main tumse ek baat karne aayi hoon*" Aawaaz ki thodi der pehle waali khushi, gary, chuhal aur lad sab gayab.

Condillac's Version:

"Amit, I have come to talk to you about something," she said in a voice stripped of all its earlier affection, its indulgence.

Sah Version:

"I have something to say to you, Amit." All the cheer, the pride, the breeziness and the fondness had gone out of her voice.

In the original text the author has used four different words to depict the multitude of emotions expressed by *Ammaji* for Amit. Condillac has simply reduced the four words to two namely, 'affection' and 'indulgence', thereby losing out on thematic

significance. Sah has tried to supply almost identical lexical equivalents to almost all the four words and retained much of the effect of the original text.

Let us look at another example:

Amma jhatke se uthi aur dhaddhadati hui sidiyan utaar gayi

Condillac Version:

In one swift motion she rose and went clattering down the stairs..

Sah Version:

Springing from the chair she swept down the stairs...

Looking at the above paragraphs we can note that Condillac has used the term 'clattering' as an equivalent lexical item for *dhaddhadati* but it fails to create the swiftness of motion depicted in the original text. On the other hand it gives the reader a feeling that some inanimate object is being rolled down the stairs. In contrast, in Sah's version we find the use of the word 'swept' which has successfully depicted the fast movement.

An Analysis of Stylistic Equivalence at the Rhetorical Level:

This particular short story by Mannu Bhandari teems with rhetorical devices, which include figures of speech, set phrases, idioms, sayings, adages, etc. Translating such devices need great care and consideration from various aspects, such as fitting the context, conforming to register in the original, highlighting thematic and aesthetic significance, etc. the author will make a tentative probe into the translation by contrastive analysis of some limited aspects.

In the story, Amitosh is the central character and it won't be an exaggeration to say that the other characters are quite peripheral and their presence and activities in the narrative helps the readers to understand the character of Amitosh. This particular character as I

have already said earlier has very strong attitudes and beliefs about certain things in life and is very articulate in voicing his feelings. The author, in the original text has used a lot of rhetorical devices to help the readers gain an insight into this character and to provide information about his social status. Therefore it is imperative that these rhetorical devices are reproduced in translation. The language used by Amitosh is different from that used by the other characters in the story. He uses a lot of colloquial and slang expressions and these are quite integral to the theme and also speak with a lot of force. The hatred and disapproval that he bears in mind about his wife and others of her class is quite obvious from the monologues that he utters.

Let us look at an example:

Baharwalon ko chahe woh chakma par Amit to uska resha resha pehchanta hai. Sabke samne apnatva mein sane, madhurta ki chashni mein page jo sangeetmay shabda parul ke muh se jharte rehte hai, uske peeche bheetar hi bheetar uske liye phohash gaaliyon aor kosno ki jo bauchar nirantar hoti rehti hai-use Amit sirf Amit hi janta hai aur chahe to unhe aksharan shabda bhi de sakta hai...

Condillac version:

Well Parul could fool the world but not Amit. Only he knew the curses and abuses that lay behind the loving words and honeyed tones with which she addressed him in the presence of others.

Sah version:

Others could be taken in but not Amit. He knows her inside out. The sweet syrupy words, oozing affection and fondness that stream from her lips for him. Amit alone knows those abuses-and he can even verbalize them to the last word, if need be.

This particular paragraph in the original story carries a lot of force portraying the emotions of the speaker. Unfortunately, Condillac in her version has eliminated chunks of the original passage and thus her translation falls short of the stylistic effect of

the original. The version by Sah however is almost at par with the original retaining its stylistic value and also tries to reproduce the same force as the original passage.

Take another example:

Use to upar se niche tak jalaalat ke kichad mein puri tarah dhans kar, khud kis sifat se kamal ke patte ke tarah bedaag nikal gayi aur who hai ki is gaddi ki chindi chindi bikhar kar jati hui us aurat par uchaal de lekin ek ubaal khakar uska khoon jaise bilkul paani ho gaya. Uska sara astitva, sara punsatva aur paurush ekayek galkar kahin beh gaya aur oh bikul lunj-punj, apahij-sa, nire mans ke bejaan lothre ki tarah ho gaya.

Condillac version:

Having pushed him all the way into the mire of humiliation, she had walked away as spotless as a lotus leaf. He felt like shredding the bundle of notes to bits and throwing them at the retreating woman. But his blood, so recently boiling, had suddenly turned to water. His identity, his manhood, his very humanness seemed to melt and drain away, leaving him limp and lifeless.

Sah version:

So now he's to be sandbagged by a trick so mean! So villainous! All gift wrapped in upper class decency! The finesse with which she made her own exit, taintless like a lotus rising from mud, leaving him mired in humiliation, while he...For a moment, he felt he'd tear the notes into shreds and fling them after the receding figure... then his anger subsided, and in another moment it seemed that it turned into water. His entire life, his being, his masculinity, manhood, everything turned into water. He was like a jelly, he was crippled, he was a lifeless lump of flesh.

The version by Condillac as we can note above fails to reproduce the anger seething in the mind of the speaker which is partly attained by the version by Sah which is more vivid and loyal

to the original. In this version the metaphorical meanings are rendered more accurately. Therefore it has more stylistic value.

Mannu Bhandari has used a lot of proverbs and set phrases in the story. It is therefore important that these expressions are carried over in the translated version too in order to produce an equivalent aesthetic value of the original.

It will be clear if we look at a few examples from the text.

Kya boloon? Pehle aao apni durust nakkashidaar sau sunaari keh daaliye phir main apni lattmaar ek lohari tapkaoonga

Condillac version:

What should I say? Once you have delivered your intricate, finely crafted pieces, I will answer you with one rough but telling blow. It takes just one stroke of the blacksmith's hammer to equal the hundred delicate taps of the goldsmith's.

Sah version:

What can I say? Why don't you deliver your fine filigree piece with every 'I' dotted and every 't' crossed, and then watch me flatten it all with a single blow of my blacksmith's hammer.

In this case the author in the original text has used a reference to a popular Hindi proverb. Though both the translations have tried to bring out the semantic content of the original, the version by Condillac by trying to elaborate on the proverb but loses out on stylistic value. The Sah version is closer to the original in terms of stylistic value and also managed to retain the force and rhythm of the original.

Due to incomplete comprehension of the original context or insensitive to the stylistic value in the source text, translators of narrative fiction tend to produce deceptive equivalence in the target text. That is to say, the target text shares the corresponding referential meaning with the original, or the translators tend to establish equivalence at the level of paraphrasable material content (Basnett-McGuire 1980:115). But some losses are caused to the literary values of the original text in terms of stylistic analysis. Such

deceptive equivalence may occur in the translation at lexical, syntactical, rhetorical levels and in narrative discourse. Because of negligence or unawareness of the connotative meaning or contextual meaning of lexical items, translators tend to merely transfer the denotative meaning of the original, which results in deceptive equivalence.

Conclusion

Literary style can manifest a writer's artistic creativity. Transferring style, however, poses a difficult issue for translators. Although translatability of style is relative, we must endeavour to faithfully reproduce the style of the literary text in the source language because failure to do so will undoubtedly affect the quality of translation. With the goal of finding proper solutions to improving the translation quality, the author of this paper ventures to explore stylistic equivalence in translation of modern Hindi fiction. Based on fundamental theoretic viewpoints of literary stylistics, in combination with translation equivalence, the translator should strive towards the notion of stylistic equivalence, which aims at choosing functional equivalents to reproduce stylistic values or effects of the original in translation. With stylistic equivalence as evaluation norm, the author makes a contrastive analysis of two English versions of *Nayak Khalnayak Vidushak* written by Mannu Bhandari. The investigation shows that when thematically and/or aesthetically motivated linguistic forms are employed, stylistic equivalence can be achieved between the source text and target text. The application of stylistic analysis and interpretation to translation of literary texts can enhance the translators' awareness of stylistic values in source text and target text, enable translators to achieve stylistic equivalence. Thereby the translation quality of literary texts might be improved to a greater degree.

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Overtranslation, Undertranslation and Loss of Meaning

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0. Introduction

In this essay, we discuss the problems and obstacles that often mar the joys of reading literary texts which goes by the name of 'under translation' (or *alpaanuvaad* in Indian languages). Alternatively, in translation either because the text generated has fallen far short of expectations, resulting in the process in a zeal to replicate the source text, translators overdo their bit and come up with a target text which one could call a product of the process of 'overtranslation' (*atyanuvaad*).

Notice that what is said here applies only to such texts which are created not as adaptations or revisions, which many 're-creators' may rightfully claim, have independent existence. This is not to deny that at times, a given rendering or 'adaptation' may achieve a rare status or a beauty that might not have been associated with the original, making it possible to gain a literary fame on its own merit. This would, however, be an example of 'gain of meaning' (which we could call *arthaagam*), whereas what actually happens in almost all inter-lingual rendering is 'loss of meaning' (= *artharaas*).

0.1. Literary vs Literal: Problem of Definition

Early translation scholars have been concerned with 'literariness' (= *saahityikataa*) of the resultant texts or with 'Primary' and 'Secondary' sources (= *mukhya* vs *gauNa srota*) of translation, before they actually begin to 'appreciate', 'evaluate' or 'analyse' a literary text in translation. In reading and understanding a literary text in translation, we cannot afford to repeat such worn-out practices.

Long ago, I.A. Richards (1929) suggested that a new theory of appreciation should allow individuals trying to understand a text to

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discover themselves while trying out new discovery procedures for what he called a 'perfect understanding' of the text. If we now look back at his ideas and argue that 'perfect' understanding is only an illusory concept, then it will follow that a 'perfect' translation could only be a theoretical possibility. The general impression is that the moment we begin to read literary translations, particularly if we also happen to know the original work, the deviations stand out before us very clearly. Thus sometimes there are unavoidable operations or changes performed on the body of target texts that are rooted deeply in a very different cultural tradition. Such changes are also a part of a strategy to circumvent a virtually 'untranslatable' portion, the knowledge of which may or may not come with the experience one has had with the writings on translation theory. On some occasions, however, they may simply appear to be sheer ingenious manipulations. But then, many translators are not all apologetic about such manipulations. When this happens, some still remain upset with their own recreations or rewritings, which have thus undergone a thorough metamorphosis, while there are others who take it as their divine duty to 'improve' upon the original. One cannot forget the arrogant remark of Fitzgerald, the well-known translator of *Omar Khayyam*, who once commented that "it is an amusement to me to take what liberties I like with these Persians who (as I think) are not Poet enough to frighten one from such excursions and who really want a little art to shape them (Fitzgerald to Rev. Cowell)".

Quite in contrast is an Indian poet who, through an excellent poem, tries to define the tremendous responsibility of the translator through these lines, which are self-evident:

Poetry translation is
a transfiguration.
as a fish dives through water
the translator moves through
minds. On the bank of each
word, in the thick sand,
he kneels, studying
the colour of each shell,
blowing each conch.

Poetry translation is
 the embarrassing head-
 transposal of the Vikramaditya
 tales. The translator
 supports another poet's head on his trunk. Each line
 is a lane worn out with
 war, misery and boredom.
 A bylane of music along which
 parade immortal men, gods
 and trees. An abyss opens
 where a line ends. The souls
 of the dead quench their thirst
 in that pool of silence.

O, Those who come this way,
 please remove your footwear
 and leave your arments here.
 You must sneak through naked,
 like the wind in the valley.

One day I dreamt of myself
 translating my poetry
 into my own private language.

All of us translate each poem
 into my own private language
 and then we quarrel over the meanings.

It seems to me that the Babel
 will never be complete.

(K. Satchidanandan: 'Translating Poetry', tr. By E.V. Ramakrishnan, *Chandrabhaagaa II*, Vol. II, 1984, pp. 39-40)

0.2. Translation as Rewriting: Accolades and Brickbats

The moot question is not whether have any right to deviate by deliberately undertranslating texts or by bringing in 'supplements' or substitutions. Rather the question is whether such deviations can also lead to literary innovations on its own right, and

if so, can involve rewriting inevitably. Recall what Basnett and Lefevere said:

"Translation is, of course, a rewriting of an original text. All rewritings, whatever their intention, reflect a certain ideology and a poetics and as such manipulate literature to function in a given society in a given way. Rewriting is manipulation, undertaken in the service of power, and in its positive aspect can help in the evolution of a literature and a society".

There are times when a translator who is himself a powerful writer and has original genius accepts, quite voluntarily, a 'subordinate' role in allowing the transposition of an original author in his or her language. We know about the Spanish ballads in English mainly through Byron's versions. When Wilhelm Meister was translated by Carlyle, he freed the resultant text from the mannerisms and tricks of the original. Such interests as the English nation has been induced to take in German literature dates from the appearance of Carlyle's translation. Such could be the influence of a translation. What the world knows as *Illiad* and *Odyssey* today exist, thanks to the excellent, but sometimes quite creatively deviant, efforts by Pope who brought them out in 1715-20 and 1715-26, respectively. In fact Dryden said very clearly about what should be an ideal aim of a literary translator in the following words:

"A translator that would write with any force or spirit of the original must never dwell on the words of his author. He ought to possess himself entirely, and perfectly comprehend the genius and sense of his author, the nature of the subject, and the terms of the art or subject treated of; and then express himself as justly, and with as much life, as if he wrote an original; whereas he who copies word for word losses all the spirit in the tedious translation".

But at times a translator is also subjected to unkind remarks because of the deviations he/she makes. Take, for example, the case of Charles Jarvis' translation of the famous Spanish text *Don Quixote* (1742) which appeared after Jarvis passed away. There was a malicious theory which apparently Pope was supposed to have

authored when he commented, according to Warburton, that 'Jarvis translated *Don Quixote* without knowing Spanish'. Notice that this was a comment on a translation which has been reprinted innumerable times since its first appearance, and this was what has made Cervante's masterpiece known to so many generations. The comment which was wholly untrue, was only a reaction against the changes and modifications made. Whatever we may say about Edward Fitzgerald's attitude to the original Persian writing, it is still a fact that he would be remembered not as a translator of Sophocles into English, but as someone who transfigured, if we may say so, through his version of '*Rubaiyat*' (1859), Omar Khayyam a medieval Persian poet to an English genius of the nineteenth century. Another translator, Arthur O'Shaughnessy in his rendering of '*Lays of France*' (1872) follows suit, and charts an independent course as he elaborates, paraphrases and embroiders rather than translating the '*Lais*' of Marie de France.

Notice that translated literatures have sometimes been responsible for major literary movements. The influence of Ibsen in translation which has changed the dramatic method of the modern stage in the European context earlier, or the translation of a dramatic genius like Brecht into different Indian languages are examples of this point. But a more apt instance can be found in the powerful impulse provided to the Romantic Movement in the continent by Voss' translation of '*Odysse*' (1781) and '*Illiad*' (1793) and A.W. Von Schlegel's renderings of Shakespeare over a thirteen-year period (1797-1810).

1. The Text and The Work

Some structuralists interpret reading of a literary text as a productive and creative. Rather than viewing the reader of a text at the end of the line, waiting to 'receive' a text or a work and 'receive from' it pleasure, pain, fun, directions, advice or even responses to questions that he always wanted to ask but dared not ask, the reader is viewed as reading to produce 'interpretations', to create histories, ideas, mores, sciences and systems that are as valuable as the text itself. A reader always rewrites the texts, and he comes back to do so again and again, because every time he writes it, the text appears ever more 'writable'. He does so because he is able to mimic the

creative process that was the cause of the writing of this given text in the first place, without worrying about the accuracy or otherwise of the reproduction or rewriting. Thus, texts are scriptable by definition, notice that here the reverberations available in a text are more important than the thing itself, as Mallarme had put it long back.

In comparison, works are extremely 'readable' objects which are not written again and again. They are only to be read and enjoyed. They are only to be consumed, as it were words in these works move from a definite point to another definite or 'appointed' end, and hence they captive the readers. That means that all works of certain standard or value are extremely 'lisible' but rarely 'scriptible'. Obviously, another important point of difference between the text and the work is that the latter fades more rapidly than the former. The text lives through different ages and outlooks, and, at times, even written in different languages. The *RaamaayaNa* text provides one of the best examples of this. All the works that are a kind of response to the text of the Raama-Siitaa or the Raama-RaavaNa story written in Awadhi, Bengali, Maithli, Telugu, Tamil, and a host of other languages, including languages used outside India (e.g. Thai) are works as well as different readings of the same text. Just as these could be interpreted in one sense as translations or as 'trans-creations', in another sense they provide us with a kind of creative response provided by (readers of texts) with extraordinary literary skills (such as Tulsidaasa, Krittivasa or Kamban, etc).

1.1. Translation as Interpretation

It is important for us to understand in what literary translators are capable of positively contributing to literary appreciation and criticism, sometimes more than the monolingual conventional critic. Notice that more often than not, the typical critical analysts believe in a set of moral and formal values of the texts and works to be interpreted-values that are supposedly 'eternal'. In contrast, the translator, in trying to go through the twin processes of 'comprehension' and 'formulation', first tries to find out – not about the morality or the formal structure of the text – but about a series of wh-questions about its origin, function and future. In

particular, he would like to know: who wrote the text and under what socio-political conditions; who were/are its readers and what were their social compositions; and at which point of time the text emerged. Secondly, a typical critic will look for a wholistic meaning in a text, i.e., look for 'the' meaning, not caring to appreciate that language (and consequently, literature, too) could be ambiguous.

Secondly, although critics may consider the search for alternative meanings or supplementary meanings futile, or although they may, at the most, restrict themselves to only a few apparently legible interpretations self-evident from several cues that the author may have provided, literary translators are not bound by any of these guileless and simplistic interpretations. This is because they are not only interpreting the original text, they are reading it to re-read and re-create. They are finding meanings in a text in relation to the world of meaning of the target language semantics as well as in terms of its possible readings (which each one of them thinks is possible) in the source culture and community.

Thirdly, since ten different translators are likely to give ten different translations, based on many differing interpretations, this appreciation of ambiguity is ingrained in the approach of a literary translator. In fact, it is now increasingly realised that one can only interpret a literary text only if one dares attempting to render it – interlingually, inter-semiotically or even intra-lingually, although the third approach is usually uninstantiated. Notice that some of the best critiques of a literary text have come from their cinematic renderings (hence, inter-semiotically).

1.2. Reading of Literary Texts: The Anomaly

When we discuss the problem of the reading of literary texts, an interesting anomaly comes to the fore. Consider, for instance, what the well-known fiction write Jorge Luis Borges tells us about the mysterious language of Tlonians. He paints the Tlons as people from another planet who talk without nouns, because the world for them is a heterogenous series of independent acts'. Equivalents to nouns in the language of Tlons work with impersonal verbs modified by monosyllabic suffixes having adverbial function. For instance, here as a word 'translation' will be an impossibility, but 'to translate' is

perfectly possible. That is the kind of confusing situation that translation theoreticians have to deal with. The example used by Tirumalesh was of course different: 'moon' (being an impossible construction) versus 'to moonate' (being perfectly possible). As we have seen with various paradoxes in the theory of translation, it applies on the verb (=to translate') in which, we are interested in, too.

At this point, it is educative to recall what is known as the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis which claims that language acts as a grid, or a *vettana* to look at the world outside, i.e., it will structure, classify, assign truth values, determine presuppositions or colour our perception of the world, just as our culture would determine what kind of language we will have or what will be its various categories, derivational mechanisms, sentential rules, sound laws of constraints. Even if we leave out the question of lack of falsifiability of such a hypothesis, and even if it is partly true that the "the world in which different societies live are distinct worlds, not merely the same world with different labels attached", English and Hindi may be languages quite different from the world of Tlolan. In our world 'to translate' may be semantically void; otherwise, how can one explain the fact that while there is an enormous literature pointing out the difficulties, if not the impossibilities, of translating, there is also a huge repository of actual translations existing in our languages.

Add to that the examples that anybody can produce to show different two languages can be in terms of their expressive power. An impossible, illogical and ungrammatical structure in one language becomes a perfectly possible structure in another. The more we discover such language differences, the more remote seems the possibility of our reaching the declared goal of building a Universal Grammar. Some have learnt the art of getting around this problem by emphasizing that rather than talking about laws that are purported to be 'universals', one should view language structures or such seemingly opposing grammatical constructions in terms of language typology. Others have taken it as evidence for the impossibility of translation.

It is not difficult to understand the frustration of the universalist. Just when everything seems to be going well with his theoretical predictions about the UG or with his universal hypotheses, there seems to appear, with reasonably devastating effect, a Malayalam, Maithili, Dyirbal, Malagasy, Middle Mongolian or a little known Brazilian language that upsets all generalizations of linguists and universalists. However, to draw a negative inference from the above events or from the mythical episode of Narcissus and Echo is to give up all hope of reaching any meaningful explanation of the phenomenon. It is not enough to state that languages defy generalization. Such defiance also needs to be explained.

1.3. The Difficulties

As for the impossibility of translation, a translator may have an aim which he may not be able to fulfil. The reasons for such a failure could be many. He may not be able to decode the text fully. This difficult-to-decode text need not be a difficult literary text alone. It can be difficult scientific or legal text too. But obviously, this is more likely to happen in the case of literary translation. This may happen even if he knows the language well.

The other possibilities are that his competence in the target language (TL) may not be the same as his knowledge of the source language (SL). Alternatively, the structure of SL and TL may be so different that even the best translators cannot do justice. And then there is danger that he may read more meaning into a text than was intended by the original author.

1.4. The Successes

It does not rule out the possibility that some translators may achieve their desired end, whatever that may be. There may be several factors that may contribute to such success – perceived or real. The most important of these is the knowledge of both SL and TL that a translator operates with. More often not, in such cases, the translator is a mother tongue speaker of the TL or a grass root bilingual with both languages available at home. There may be other reasons too. The translator may share the concern, philosophy, and other aspects, excluding the professional expertise,

of the author of the text. Yet another reason for success could be that the SL and TL were genealogically and typologically close to each other.

2. A case in hand

2.1. Two Texts

The term 'success' is very difficult to be precise about in the context of literary renderings. For instance, for a long time Sukumar Roy in Bengal literature has been regarded as an impossible author and limeric writer to translate, although some of his pieces have been translated by his son, Satyajit Ray, the eminent film-maker. Still, his nonsense fables would always be regarded as a challenge for anyone who dare translating them into English or any other non-Indian language. But consider these two examples of his 'fables bilge' or 'malarkey', as they are sometimes called:

Text 1A: Translation

From Sukanta Chaudhuri 1987 '*Ha-ja-ba-ra-la*' of Sukumar Ray (Illustrated Weekly of India, 14 June no., pp. 36-9)

It was terribly hot. I lay in the shade of a tree, feeling quite limp. I had put down my handkerchief on the grass; I reached out for it to fan myself, when suddenly it called out
‘Miaow!’

Here was pretty puzzle. I looked and found that it wasn’t a handkerchief any longer. It had become a plump ginger cat with bushy whiskers, staring at me in the boldest way.

‘Bother!’ I said. ‘My handkerchief’s turned into a cat’.

‘What’s bothering you?’ answered the Cat. ‘Now you have an egg, and then suddenly it turns into a fine quacky duck. It’s happening all the time’.

I thought for a while and said, ‘But what should I call you now? You aren’t really a cat, you’re a handkerchief’.

‘Please help yourself’, he replied. ‘You can call me a cat, or a handkerchief, or even a semi-colon’.

‘Why a semi-colon?’ I asked.

‘Can’t you tell?’ said the cat, winking and sniggering in a most irritating manner. I felt rather embarrassed, for

apparently I should have known all about semi-colon. ‘Ah!’ I said quickly. “Now I see your point”.

Text 2A: Translation

From Sukanta Chaudhuri 1987 ‘ha-ja-ba-ra-la’ of Sukumar Ray (The Illustrated Weekly of India. 21 June no, pp. 36-9)

He really was a most extraordinary creature.

‘Who are you?’ I asked him ‘What’s your name?’

He thought for a while and said, ‘My name’s Higgle-Piggle-Dee. I’m called Higgle-Piggle-Dee, my brother’s called Higgle-Piggle-Dee, my uncle’s called Higgle-Piggle-Dee....’ I cut him short. ‘Why don’t you simply say the whole family’s called Higgle-Piggle-Dee?’

He pondered the matter again. ‘Oh no’, he said at last, ‘I’m really called Tokai, my uncle’s called Tokai, my nephew’s called Tokai, my cousin’s called Tokai, my father-in-law’s called Tokai...’

‘Are you sure?’ I asked sternly. ‘Or are you making all this up?’

He grew confused and stammered, ‘Well, actually my father-in-law’s called Biscuit.’

There is no doubt that both these passages independently read very well. But to consider the translated texts seriously, let us look into the original texts now in order to determine the success or failure of these two translations:

Text 1B: The Original (Bengali)[Transliterated in Roman]

From Prafulla Kumar Patra, ed. 1986. Sukumar racanaabali; (Calcutta: Patra’s Publications. 125-140), pp. 125:

bejaay garam. gaachtalaay dibyi chaayaar madhye cupcaap shuye aachi, tabu gheme asthir. Ghaaser upar rumaalTaa

chila; ghaam muchbaar jonno jei se Taa tulte giyechi amni rumaalTaa bollo, ‘mEo!’ ki aapad! RumaalTaa aabaar mEo kare keno?

ceye dekhi rumaal to aar rumaal nei, dibyi moTaa-so Taa laal TakTake EkTaa beRaal go-f fuliye pET pET kore aamaar dike taakiye aache.

aame bollaam, 'ki mushkil! chila rumaal, haye gElo EkTaa be Raal.'

omni beRaalTaa bole uThlo, 'mushkil aabaar ki? Chilo Ektaa Dim, haye gEla dibyi EkTaa pEk-peke haa-s. e to haameshaai hocche.'

aami khaanik-khan bhebe bollaam, 'taahole tomaay Ekhon ki bole Daakbo? tumi to satyikaarer beRaal nao, aasale tumi hoccho rumaal.'

beRaal bollo, 'beRaalo bolte paaro, rumaalo bolte paaro, candrabinuo bolte paaro'. aami bollaam, 'candrabindu kEno?

shune beRaalTaa 'taao jaano naa?' bole Ek cokh bu-je fEc kore bisrii rOkom haa-ste laaglo. aami bhaari aprastut haye gelaam.

mane holo, oi chndrbindur kathaaTaa nishcay aamaar bojhaa ucit chilo taai thatomato kheyee taaRaataaRi bole phellaam, 'o hE-hE- bujhte perechi.'

Text 2B: The original

From ibid, pp. 132:33:

jantuTaar rakam-sakam dekhe aamaar bhaari adbhut laaglo. aami jiggaa-saa korlaam, 'tumi ke? Tomaar naam ki?' se khaanikknan bhebe bollo, 'aamaar naam hijibijibij. Aamaar maamaar naam hijibijibij, aamaar baabaar naam hijibijibij, aamaar pisher naam hijibijibij---'. aami bollaam, 'taar ceye sojaa bollei hay tomaar guSTi-shuddho sabaai hijibijibij'.

se aabaar khaanik bhebe bollo, 'taa to nay, aamaar naam takaai. Aamaar maamaar naam takaai, aamaar khuRor naam takaai, aamaar meshor naam takaai, aamaar shwashurer naam takaai -----'

aami dhamak diye bollaam, 'satyi bolcho? naa baaniye?' jantuTaa kEmom thatomato kheyeye bollo. 'naa naa, aamaar shwashurer naam biskuT' ...

2.2. Analysis

If we compare the original passages with the two translated texts, certain semantic and structural losses become evident. Let us take the first set of texts (la and lb) in original and translation first.

The first noticeable thing was that the translator has violated the norms for the use of space and silence as in the original text. The first paragraph should have ended after the sentence 'Here was a pretty puzzle', although this sentence itself was not enough for the original '*ki aapad! RumaalTaa mEo kare kEno?*' A more literal rendering of the original would have been: 'What is happening? Why does the kerchief say: Miaouw?' But that is beside the point here, as we are not merely considering truthfulness, but are trying to pin-point losses.

Secondly, "'Why a semi-colon?'" I asked' should have been a part of the earlier paragraph, if it was to be like the original.

But this kind of modification was more evident in the second set of texts in 2a and 2b: There was no paragraph division in the Bengali text where it is there in English (between the first two paragraphs in the English version). The last two paragraphs in the English text (including one more paragraph which is not quoted here which together form just one unit in Ray's Bengali original). This kind of division, except probably in poetry may be allowed, particularly because they are usually in conformity with the target language way of organizing things in fiction or such other prose texts.

Now let us look into losses, both lexical and semantic. Expressions such as 'dibyi (=leisurely)', 'tabu' (=still), 'ghaam muchaar jonno' (=to wipe out perspiration), 'cupcaap' (=quietly) etc. in the first paragraph are missing in the English version. Also, 'rumaal to aar rumaal nei' could have been replaced with the handkerchief was no more a kerchief" but the translator, for reasons that had to do with the naturalness of English syntax, opted for 'it wasn't a handkerchief any longer'. 'moTaa-soTaa laal TakTake EkTaa beRaal' became a plump ginger cat' which was indeed the best in this situation. But how on earth does one translate 'pET pET kore...taakiye aache' (in la: 'staring at me in the boldest way')? It is not mere 'boldness'; add to that 'mischiefousness', 'repudiativity', 'inquisitiveness' and 'plainness', because had it been mere 'boldness', a back translator (from English into Bengali) would render it as 'kOT kOT kore...'. Also missing in English is the alliterative 'chila rumaal, haye gElo EkTaa beRaal', even though 'ki mushkil?' has been aptly converted into 'Bother!'

In considering changes, however, we find a number of significant alterations – some required because of linguistic and cultural differences, some others not so necessary. For instance, in the first text, the alternative name offered by the ginger cat was not 'Semi-colon'. That was surely a suggestion of the 'chandrabindu'. The pedantic nasalization mark ~ or not so scholarly 'nasal accent' do not come anywhere near the original word which carries a lot of associative meaning because of the way it looks in the Bengali writing system. Such connotations are difficult to render. Similarly, the translator had to take hard decisions on what to call a number of Ray originals which can be enlisted below:

2.3. Glossary & Further Discussion

- a. moTaa soTaa laal TakTake EkTaa beRaal = ginger cat
- b. pE-kpE-ke haa-Ms = quacky duck
- c. cnadrabindu = semi-colon
- d. gechodaadaa = Cousin Treehooper

<i>e. gechodoudi</i>	= ..Treehooper's wife
<i>f. daa~Rkaak</i>	= Jungle-crow
<i>g. baRamantrii</i>	= the Head Vizier
<i>h. paatra mitra</i>	= pastors and masters
<i>i. Daaktaar</i>	= doctors and proctors
<i>j. gechobaajaar, kaageyaapaTi</i>	= Raven Row, Woodmarket
<i>k. paatikaa, heRekaak, raamkaak</i>	= House-crow, Gor-crow and Carrion Crow
<i>l. udho..budho</i>	= Other... Brother
<i>m. hijibijibji</i>	= Higgle- Piggle-Dee
<i>n. shribEkaraN shing</i>	= Grammaticus Horner
<i>o. nERaa</i>	= Smoothpath
<i>p. jholaa pOraa hutom pE~caa</i>	= Screech-owl in a long gown
<i>q. baaduRgopaal</i>	= Bat
<i>r. mejomaamaa</i>	= Uncle
<i>s. bORomaamaa</i>	= Uncle

The last two 'uncles' have entirely different roles to play but one finds it very difficult to translate kinship terms from Indian languages into English anyway. As we can see in Text 2a and 2b '*pishe*', '*maamaa*', '*khuRo*', '*mesho*' in the dialogue of Higgle-

Piggle-Dee were avoided by the translator. Instead, he chose: 'uncle', 'uncle', 'nephew', and 'cousin', respectively. This is a typical problem with a culturally different text. The translator was obviously aware that '*khuRo*' (= father's younger brother) and '*mesho*' (= mother's sister's husband) cannot be equated with 'nephew' and 'cousin', but there had to be different kin words (other than the generic 'Uncle' for all) to make this part of the text effective, and there aren't that many terms in English. Similarly, while the transfer of '*nERaa*' into 'Smoothpate' in 2.3(o) above was smooth, '*baaduRgopaal*' cannot be adequately covered under a simple 'Bat'. The translator very intelligently used expressions such as 'higgle-Piggle-Dee, 'Crowworthy Cole-Black' as well as various classifications of crows (=Corvus Sylvanus, Jungle-Crow, Gor-crow, Raven-crow and Carrion Crow), but a number of other names probably were not possible to handle equally deftly. This included '*gechodaadaa*', *majaaru*' or '*baaduRgopaa;l'*, etc. The blooperous rendering was of course in the fourth paragraph in 2a which starts the '*Tokai*' narration but makes a costly mistake. There is a logic in what the Higgle-Piggle-Dee says, just as there is a logic in the concept: '*Ha-ja-ba-ra-la*'. He does not and cannot say that his name was '*Tokai*'. As anyone can see in 2b, he says that his maternal uncle (and various other relatives) is called '*Tokai*', which he says to counter the allegation of the listener (=the self), viz. that Higgle-Piggle-Dee better says that the whole clan ('*gusTishuddho*') is called Higgle-Piggle-Dee'. Therefore, the sentence spoken after the creature pondered for a while cannot start with I'm really called *Tokai*'. I don't think this was a chance error.

The probability was that the translator was doing what is called 'saving' (or, improving upon) the text' by trying to forge a link between the two 'apparently senseless statements of the Higgle-Piggle-Dee. But if one thinks about it seriously, now that we know a little more about the endlessly different and creative manners in which human languages show semantic and grammatical categorization of any concept, it isn't entirely impossible to think of a culture where naming patterns have such rules as given by our *hijibijibij* here. Thus, it is perfectly possible for different kinds of people in your little world to have three sets of names : *hijibijibij*, *Takaai* and *biskuT*.

To come back to the first text, although most readers would point out that the expression '*ha-ja-ba-ra-la*' in Bengali has now become synonymous with '*hijibiji*' or '*hijibijibij*', i.e. in English – nonsense, fiddlesticks or poppycock. I think there is a deeper logic in the name. This is possible to appreciate if one considers the apparently crazy (but actually very scientific) organization of the sound system or *varNas* in the great grammar of Panini written 2500 years ago. Notice that Panini's '*shivasuukta*' had fourteen 'words', the last two being: *hayavaraT; laN*, which is what gives us '*ha ya va ra la*' (In Bengali, the Sanskritic 'ya' becomes 'ja'). One who does not know the Indian grammatical tradition would probably miss out the simile intended by the author.

The above discussion makes one point pretty clear, namely that even if one takes the translation of very high quality, there is bound to be a semantic loss, gap or mismatch. That takes us to the next section which addresses multiple texts showing different kind of losses. This discussion is very minimal, because as students of translation, the losses would be easily perceived by all of us.

3. Loss of Meaning

3.1. Problematic Areas

As Newmark rightly points out, the translator is a victim of a constant tension between the acts of overtranslation and undertranslation. A lot of semantic gaps in translated texts arise because of this tension.

Yet another set of possible problems arises if the SL text has a situation peculiar to the nature and culture of the SL speech community. A translator then has to decide whether he should (i) transcribe (ii) translate, (iii) substitute with something similar from TL, (iv) naturalize, by making minor modifications (be they grammatical or phonological), (v) by loan translating, or (vi) by paraphrasing. If SL and TL differ lexically, grammatically and phonologically at both langue and parole levels there is bound to be a loss, especially at the lexical level.

Again, individual uses of language (although SL and TL are different) of the author and the translator may not coincide. Idiosyncrasies and private meanings may cause losses.

Further, the author and the translator may have different theories of meaning. Differences may occur in what each one of them values more than anything else:

Denotation or Connotation

Symbolism or Realism (any other 'ism'-related differences)

Multiple Vs. Single interpretation

3.2. Texts and Examples

Let us take up a few typical examples of each of these problems. But we can start with the two dangers that a translator has to tread upon all the time - the dangers of overtranslation and undertranslation.

3.2.1. Overtranslation

The first instance we have given a poem (or song) from '*Aruup ratan*' ('Formless Jewel', see Ananda Lal's translation) of Tagore which goes as follows:

Text 3A: The Original (Bengali)

*mama cite niti nritye ke ye naace
taa-taa thai-thai, taa-taa thai-thai, taa-taa thai-thai.
taari sange kii mridange sadaa baaje
taa-taa thai-thai, taa-taa thai-thai, taa-taa thai-thai.*

*hassi-kaannaa hiraa-paannaa dole bhaale.
kaa-pe chande bhaalomanda taale taale,
naace janma naace mritya paache paache
taa-taa thai-thai, taa-taa thai-thai, taa-taa thai-thai,
kii aananda, kii aananda, kii aananda*

*dibaa-raatri naace mukti naace bandha,
se tarange chuTi range paache paache
taa-taa thai-thai, taa-taa thai-thai, taa-taa thai-thai.*

While rendering it into English, Father C.F. Andrews tried to overdo as a translator (as noticed quite early by Surendranath Dasgupta in his review of '*rakta karabi*') when he translated the above lines as follows:

Text 3B; Translation 1

"In my glad heart, in my mad heart, who is dancing?
 Ding a ding dong, ring a ting tong, ding a ding dong
 Where no fears are, joy and tears are ever glancing,
 Ding a ding dong ...

Where the music rises higher, like a fire,
 Now advancing, all entrancing, joy enhancing
 Ding a ding dong ...

Pain and gladness, smiles and sadness, toil and leisure
 Night and morning, light and dawning, full the measure
 Ding a ding dong ...

Oh the pleasure, oh the pleasure, oh the pleasure
 Of our dancing, ever glancing, all entrancing
 Ding a ding dong ...

Like the Oceans in its motion waves are
 Fears are groundless, freedom boundless, life is waking
 With our dancing, ever glancing, joy enhancing
 Ding a ding dong ..."'

(cf.A. Lal 1987:100-1)

Consider what a recent serious translator of Tagore such as Ananda Lal had to say about such overtanslations: 'Such a translation can only provoke laughter. The meticulous attention paid to rhyme and metre replicates the original Bengali technique but does not possess any vitality of its own, and the jejune refrain kills whatever little life the song had'. The translation that Lal himself provides of this text is free from this tension.

Text 3C: Translation 2

Who dances in my heart the dance eternal?
What mridanga beats with it incessantly?

Smiles and tears, emeralds and diamonds, swing in fate.
Good and bad vibrate to the rhythm, keeping time, Birth and
death dance at one another's heels.

What happiness, what happiness, what happiness.
For freedom and confinement dance all day and night
I flow with those ways, joyful, at their heels.

3.2.2. Losses

Let us consider some examples of the possible losses. The next two texts are from the Sumati-sataka, written in Telugu (a part of Niite-satakas, others being *Kumara Sataka*, *Kumari Sataka*, *Kanta Sataka*, *Suniiti Sataka* and *Vemana Sataka*; by Baddenna of 12th century):

Text 4A: The Original (Telugu)

adharamunu kadala niyyaka
The lip without letting move

madhuraamruta bhaasaa ludigi maunasthundai
nectar-like-sweet speech having died keeping silent
down

Yadhikara rooga puurita
Authority sick filled

badhiraandhaka savamu juuda paapamu sumatii
deaf and blind corpse to see sinister O man with good sense

Text 4B: Translation 1 (C.P. Brown 1842)

He moves not his lips! He refrains from words flowing with honey and nectar. He, a solitary, deaf, and blind corpse swollen up with the disease of authority, is indeed a shocking object.

Text 4C: Translation 2 (Srinath and Subba Rao 1987)

Feigning speech but tight-lipped
 withholding sweet word in stony silence
 he is a power-swollen corpse –
 deaf and blind, to sight him is sin, O Sumathi!

Text 4D: Translation 3 (UNS)

The lips move not
 Speech-sweet as nectar, die down; is mum.
 O man with good sense! It is indeed sinful
 to see a deaf and blind corpse –
 filled with disease of authority.

3.2.3. Undertranslation

An example of undertranslation comes from Thomas Fitzsimmons' translation of a ghazal of Ghalib's as given in Aijaz Ahmad's book (1971: 25) which reported on an experiment to get poems translated by monolingual poets through the well-defined mechanism of using an intermediate literal translation plus a detailed commentary forming the bases. The original ghazal of Ghalib in Urdu reads like this in its first two couplets:

Text 5A: The Original

*Ishrate qatraa hai daryaa mē? fanaa ho jaanaa,
 Dard kaa had se guzarnaai hai dard kaa dawaai ho jaanaa.*

*Jaāfase gariye mubacchal badme sard huāa
 Baavar aayaa hamē? paanii kaa ho jaanaa.*

Original explanation or the philosophical import is not difficult to understand. The first couplet means that to be consumed by the whole can be the ultimate joy of the part, just as pain becomes its own medicine. The second one tells us that we can only sigh and not weep at our weakness once it crosses certain limits, which is why one can now believe that water (=tears) can become air (=sigh) – comparable to the process of cloud-formation. The literal

translation of Ahmad, though not claiming to be poetic, seems to capture the above meanings aptly:

Text 5B: Translation 1

"The happiness of the drop is to die in the river;
When the pain exceeds bearable limits,
the pain itself becomes the medicine.

Our weakness is such that tears have turned mere sighing
Now we really believe that water can turn into air".

Let us consider a target poet's translation of this important poetic text:

Text 5C: Translation 2 (Thomas Fitzsimmons; cf. Ahmad, pp.25)

"Waterbead ecstasy: dying in a stream;
Overtranslation, Undertranslation and Loss of Meaning

Too strong a pain brings its own balm.

So weak now we weep sighs only;
Learn surely how water turns into air".

First, the text may describe a situation peculiar to the environment of the particular speech community or its 'peculiar' social setting which to us may seem peculiar and odd about may not actually be so. In such contexts, whatever strategy one adopts (transcription, substitution, naturalization or translation), the translated text is bound to leak in one respect or another. I would like to give here two different pieces, both in English – one translated by a western translator and the other being a product of a group translation where all the members of rendering cultural items or culturally-sensitive texts.

Consider this brief piece of translation without the original (for a better appreciation of this point) from a 1956 poem by Suryakant Tripathy 'Nirala' in translation:

Text 6: Translation from Hindi (Title: 'Love Song')

I'm a Brahmin's son
And I love her.

She belongs to the Kahars
And at the first crack of light
She brings the water-jugs to my house,
And I'm dying for her.

She's black as a cuckoo, oh,
Her walk straight and steady
And not yet married. My heart
Bursts with wanting her.

She comes every day and wakes us all
But I'm the only one who understands her game.
She takes away the big water jug
And I bide my time.

(From David Rubin's Selected poems of *Nirala: A Season on the Earth*; Columbia U. Press, New York)

If such texts are placed before a Western reader, one cannot expect that they will be fully appreciated, because the reader concerned may not be able to understand the natural and social background of this piece. One will naturally fail to understand with what magic the tedium of the village-belles bringing water-pitches from a long distance is transformed into an aesthetically glorious visual that a male beholder longs to cerebrate and ruminate it again and again, day after day. Besides, a culture and society that does not have a caste-based stratification will miss out some other aspects of the relationship between the two here – the hero, a Brahmin – and the woman, a *Kahar*.

3.2.4. Contextualizing the text

The next text is again deeply entrenched in the environ and society it belongs to. Any Indian reader reading it in English will

surely have a better chance of its fuller appreciation. The swear words used, or comparisons such as '*Mallarme*' > '*Mallar-Meta*' (in the pattern of 'Narsingh-Me(h)ta'), the fun intended to be made out of Kafka > *Kofka*, or the Sardar-ji being referred to will be difficult, if not impossible puns for a British English or an American English reader to appreciate. Obviously, the Indianism about expressions such as 'all wanting to leave', etc. are intended here. Consider the following longish poem by Sitangshu Yashachandra translated from Gujarati by Saleem Peeradina, Jayant Parkh, Rasik Shah and Gulam Mohammed Sheikh (Again, only English version is given to make the point):

Text 7: Translation from Gujarati (Title: Magan's Insolence)

1

It all started with stubborn Magan saying
I want to live.

The Gujarati literati were dumbfounded:
You dolt, is that ever possible?
The young clamoured on one side - what about
our experimental periodicals?

On the other the elders rebuked - this
way centuries may pass idly.

All agreed upon this - if you choose to live
then quit the sanctum of literature.

Done, said Magan.

The moment he stepped across the threshold
a miracle occurred.
From the niche appeared the Goddess Saraswati
and informed the king
that where Magan went she would follow.
And behind her – Goddess Experiment,
Miss Realism, Mr. Rythem – all wanting
to leave, all adamant.
So they decided, all right, you trouble-maker,
stay and rot in that corner.

2

But the fellow whose name was Magan,
a few days later says I want love.
All right, you nut.

So we took him to Apollo Street.
In the picturesque square, an
impressive building. In the building
a secret chamber under lock and key.

Took Magan to the state Bank's safe-deposit vault -
as stated in the scriptures, brought a priest
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along to recite mantras

- handed one key to Magan and kept the other.
Then with chant of glory to

Ramachandra, Sita's spouse, opened the locker.
Here, take love.

But the son of a bitch Magan says - this is not love.
If this is not love then what is it, you
bastard?

All the bigwigs - prize-winners, medallists - have
taken love for their stories, poems and plays
from this very source.

And you, fancy idiot, claim that this is not love.
What is it? If this is not love what is it?

What is the purpose of keeping it in the
safe-deposit vault then?

So you can use it when necessary and return.
It never goes out of style.

All those veteran professors use it year after
year and some of them have used it for
twenty-five years - yet it stays brand new.

But
this prick Magan, he says -
I want to live and I want to love.

3

Well then.

Crazy Magan was locked up in the House of Letters.

The place has western-style latrines.

In the morning everybody used paper.

Need a lot of paper: but that Sardarji
from the Times of India distributed huge rolls
of paper which were left hanging there.

Then all the literary big-shots

-old and new-

put their signatures at the bottom of the
paper after use.

And the contents would be published in
periodicals or read over Akashvani.

In the case of an upset after bad food.
an entire novel could be serialized.

On anniversaries and festive occasions, special
numbers and anthologies would be brought out
from this stock only.

This swine of a Magan did his work
really well.

Early every morning, he would do the job –
and forget to sign.

But those literature-loving editors would
always be lurking around.

They would grab a new poem (even if it had
been discarded)

and print it under the name of Magan,
poet extraordinary.

Only rarely would they put their own signatures.
(Generally speaking, there is some ethics in
our Gujarati literature. No one would pinch
another's poem.)

And within a year, Magan got the State prize
and five or six gold medals.

And then there were celebrations and
felicitations: Every paper announced that on
a certain date and day, a felicitation programme
for Magan, the poet emeritus, would take
place with the following speakers and
who the chairman would be, plus a long list
of well-wishers.

Each one of them spoke, What oratory!
Some mentioned Kofka, another spoke of
Mallarmeta and still another of Narsinhmeta.
Someone spoke of the love between a camel
and a cow.

And each one had an anecdote to relate.
Auspicious and inauspicious- all was revealed.
Finally someone happened to remember:

Let that swine Magan say few words.
The chairman was all set to press the bell
saying one, two, three, speak -

And Magan, the dolt, the poor idiot (one
pities him) says (the same, what else?), he
says (and this after receiving the prize for poetry),
says I want to live. I want to love.

I want to write a poem.

(From Nissim Ezekiel & Meenakshi Mukherjee, eds. 1991. *Another India: An Anthology of Contemporary Indian fiction and poetry*; Penguin. Pp 221-4)

3.2.5. Dimensions of differences

The other possible source of loss is in such pairs of languages that are different in langue as well as parole, i.e. in both structure and use. Such differences may occur at any level. For instance, at

the lexical level, the differences may be in different dimensions such as follows:

- (a) formality of styles available (frozen to completely informal),
- (b) affectivity that any given text can achieve in the two languages (no reaction to overreaction),
- (c) how general or technical these languages can be/become, and
- (d) how are the texts evaluated in these languages (in terms of morality, pleasure, intensity or coverage?)

Let us consider the problem of style first. We will take a few texts to show that it will not be an easy decision for a translator in any one of our Indian languages to decode the particular style used in them accordingly decide as to how best to convert it into our languages:

Text 8: The Original (Kipling: The Beginning of Armadillos, p 70)

“But I am tortoise,” said Slow-and-Solid,

“Your mother was quite right. She said that You were to scoop me out of my shell. Begin.”

“You didn’t say she said that a minute ago,” said the Painted Jaguar. “You said, she said something different.”

“Well, suppose you say that I said that she said something different. I don’t see that it makes any difference; because if she said what you said I said she said, it’s just the same as if I said what I said she said. On the other hand, if you think she said that you were to uncoil me with a scoop, instead of pawning me into drops with shell, I can’t help it, can I?”

“But you said you wanted to be scooped out of your shell with my paw”, said Painted Jaguar.

“If you’ll think again, you’ll find that I didn’t say anything of the kind. I said that your mother said that your mother said

that you were to scoop me out of my shell", said Slow-and-Solid.

Text 9: The Original (James Joyce's Ulysses; pp 56-7)

On the door step he felt in his hip pocket for the latch key. Not there. In the trousers I left off. Must get it. Potato, I have creaky wardrobe. No use disturbing her. She turned over sleepily at that time. He pulled the hall door after him very quietly, more till the foot leaf dropped gently over the threshold, a limp lid. Looked shut. All right till I come back anyhow.

Notice that such problems exist in all languages. Anyone who dares translating similar authors who wrote in Indian languages into a western language, would soon realize the difficulties in deciding what the nearest equivalent to the style used in these texts should be.

This also brings us to the fourth point: Even if we neglect the private meanings, the original author and the translator may have completely different value systems and different semantic maps with which they operate. Therefore, there are bound to be losses or gains in the domain of semantics of the text(s) being subjected to any translating activity. We are reminded of the translation of the following verse from *Amarushataka*, 49:

Text 10A: The Original (Sanskrit)

*nabhasi jaladalakSmiim saasrya viikSya drSTyaa
pravasasi yadi kaantey ardham uktvaa kathamcit
mama paTam avalambya prollkhanti dharitriim
yad anukrtavatii saa tatra vaaco nivrttaaH!*

It was translated by W.S.Merwin and L.Moussaieff Masson 1981:89 (in their anthology *The Peacock's Egg*) in the following way:

Text 10B: Translation

Lush clouds in
dark sky of tears she saw my love

if you leave me now she
 said and could not say more
 twisting my shirt
 toe gripping dust
 after that what she
 did all words
 are helpless to repeat and
 they know it and give up

It is obviously a very different task for any translator to do justice to these lines in Sanskrit. It may also be difficult for the TL readers to appreciate these sentiments because of a huge difference between the way man-woman relation unfolds in our culture and the way it works in the west. But one must still appreciate the strategy used by the translators in attempting to render the piece in English – where they made several changes:

- (i) they altered the line divisions,
- (ii) they opted for a free verse style,
- (iii) they took recourse to italicisation/underscoring to identify the incomplete sentence spoken by the woman, and
- (iv) made lexical adjustments, such as *paTam* > shirt, etc.

4. Genetically unrelated languages and translation

Translation presents special problems for languages that are genetically unrelated or typologically different. The reason is obvious. The constraints which crop up when one contrasts two such languages are the real problems in the process of translation to be tackled by any comprehensive theory, particularly if one reiterates faith in Jakobson's words that equivalence in difference is the cardinal problem of language and the pivotal concern of linguistics. There is no doubt that total translation is replacement of SL grammar and lexis by equivalent TL grammar and lexis with consequential replacement of SL phonology, graphology by (non-equivalent) TL phonology/ graphology. Catford's hypothesis may be validated only when differential bilingual dictionaries with a careful comparative definition of all the corresponding units in their

intention and extension become handy. Likewise referential bilingual grammars should define what defines and what differentiates the two languages in their selection and delineation of grammatical concepts.

A scientific investigation is warranted to study the typological differences and peculiarities in translation. Nama observes that the translator or mediator between two different linguistic systems is compelled to resolve a good number of obstacles. The success or failure of a translation mainly depends upon how far and how best the translator resolves these obstacles. Translators themselves do not find it true that the notion of equivalence can be achieved through various replacement processes between pair of languages. In 'Language, Structure and Translation', Eugene Nida remarks:

"...a careful analysis of exactly what goes on in the process of translating, especially in the case of source and receptor languages having quite different grammatical and semantic structures has shown that, instead of going directly from one set of surface structures to another, the competent translator actually goes through a seemingly roundabout process of analysis, transfer and restructuring. That is to say, the translator first analyses the message of the source language into its simplest and structurally clearest forms, transfers at this level, and then restructures it to the level in the RECEPTOR language which is most appropriate for the audience which he intends to reach...."

4.1. Cultural differences

As mentioned already, the problem of genetic unrelatedness or structural distance becomes more difficult to deal with where there exists cultural differences in addition to linguistic differences. It should not be surprising to find A.K. Ramanujan not translating the title of U.R. Ananthmurthy's *Samskaara*, even though he does translate the word differently in the text. Similarly, Radhakrishnan's retention of the word *dharma* in his translation of the Gitaa in certain contexts in his English text is justified on the same grounds.

Let us take up the example of Jayashankar Prasad's *Kaamaayanii* and its well-known structuration into 15 cantos:

Cintaa; aashaa; shraddhaa; kaam; vaasanaa; lajjaa; karma; iirSyaa; iRaa; svapna; sangharSa; nirveda; darshana; rahasya; aananda

Anybody familiar with the Indian philosophical thoughts will realize that many of these words are difficult to translate in that they will have many renderings each in any western language. In one of the several translations of this classical text, Jaikishandas Sadani 1975 opts for the following:

Anxiety; hope; faith; passion; bashfulness; action; envy; intelligence; dream; struggle; renunciation; revelation; mysticism; bliss

While there will be general agreement on some of these renderings as the one for *svapna*, *sangharSa*, etc., for many others, one doubts if the choice is acceptable taking the full connotation of such words. Take, for instance, the following naming words each one of which has so many interpretations in English:

Shraddhaa: reverence; respect; faith; trust; confidence; regard; esteem; admiration.

Karma: action; deed; work; function; occupation; fate; rite; ceremony; affair.

If these options with reasonably different meanings or different semantic shades in the source language, it seems difficult to choose any one item in the TL.

To further re-emphasize the problems that typically emerge out of language pairs that are unrelated, let us look into the last stanza of *Kaamaayanii*, and compare a few translations. This argument will find further support. Consider the following lines:

Text 11A: The Original (Hindi)

*samaras the jaR yaa cetan
sundar saakar banaa tha;
centantaa ek vilastii
aanand akhaND ghanaa tha.*

Let us now look into the different renderings that are available:

Text 12A: Translation 1 (Jaikishandas Sadani)

Matter and spirit are harmonious
 Exquisite was the form of beauty
 Consciousness alone was blossoming
 Transcendental infinite Bliss.

Text 12B: Translation 2 (B.L. Sahney)

All objects conscious or unconscious were
 Pervaded by the savour of one life,
 And beauty was incarnate everywhere,
 And Bliss intense and undivided reigned.

Text 12C: Translation 3 (D.C. Datta)

Spirit and matter both seemed one,
 Assuming beauties fresh and new;
 One consciousness pervaded all
 And joy from heaven dropped like dew.

Text 12D: Translation 4 (Rameshwar Gupta)

Spirit and matter joined,
 Beauty took form,
 One consciousness sported round,
 It was intense unbroken bliss.

While the fourth translation seems, unduly concise, the second option is the opposite: in P.Lal's words, this one seems to be "an amplified interpretation more than a translation". The third one suffers from the defect of introducing new elements merely for metrical reasons: 'dew', for instance; or even 'heaven'. These do not find mention in the original given above. The options given here for the Hindi words *jaR* and *cetan* again show the similar problems I realised earlier. In 12A, C and D, the choice is unanimous: spirit and matter for *cetan* and *jaR*, respectively.

4.2. Typological differences

An understanding of the structural complexity and typological distance along with its socio-cultural context among the languages is indeed useful in determining translation equivalence. Further this

will be of more help to translators to orient their actions and develop theories on an empirical foundation. For instance, English represents the SVO pattern and Tamil the SOV pattern of languages. The shift from one to another is possible and permissible in the process of translation but as a student of Translation Studies, one must find out whether in doing so there are a set of constraints that hinder the smooth transference or translation.

5. Summary

The main purpose of this essay was to make one aware of the fact that it is not at all unusual to enjoy the literary creativity of authors writing in distant socio-cultural environments in one's own language, but that one must be aware of the inherent difficulties with such third literatures.

Notes

1. *They are not strictly comparable though. But recall the position taken by Tirumalesh in treating translated texts as equivalent to any original text written in either of the two languages (source and target) in question, a phenomenon which he calls 'Translation as Literature Three', which remains on par with two indigenous literary traditions.*

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Translation and Reception as a Cultural Process: On the Emergence of Tragedy in Kannada Literature

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Although translation is generally considered as a literary process, it involves a series of cultural maneuvers by the cultures involved in the process, both ideologically and otherwise. The absence of tragedy as a genre in Indian literature has generally prompted scholars to perceive the emergence of tragedy in Indian literature variously as influence, reception, emergence of a new genre etc. However, a closer look at the controversies, debates, criticisms and experimentations and the changes in parallel native performing traditions reveal interesting cultural maneuvers undertaken by different groups of people in responding to the genre of tragedy, which also needs to be looked at as a part of the translation process. The paper attempts to problematize the issue by going through different modes of representations attempted in the history of modern Kannada literature, particularly during the period 1920-50, which constitutes the formation period for the genre. The problem has been approached from six different perspectives.

1. The early translations of tragedies.
2. Controversies that surrounded the early translations.
3. Attempts to create an appropriate aesthetics (sensibility) to appreciate the new genre.
4. Attempts to demonstrate the existence of tragic elements in Indian literature.
5. Attempts to demonstrate the existence of tragic heroes in Jaina literature, specifically in medieval Kannada epics.
6. The tragic nature in Kannada folk performing traditions.

The paper argues for a need to understand translation as a process of cultural production and consumption rather than as a literary one.

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1. Introduction

Translation, right from the time of its inception, is a project of cultural domination and was conceived and executed by the colonial rule in order to substantiate its political interest. Whether it is translation of the law texts or the classics, we can see the western Canon operating behind it and gradually dominating the paradigm. Notions such as the original text, interpolations, different receptions, the accuracy of translation, the chronological ordering of the texts, thereby, implying the influence of one over the other are only some of a few problems that one confronts in the field of textual criticism and translation. At the same time, it is equally important to identify and explore the ways that medieval India used to deal with the processes that are similar to translation during the modern period. As many as three hundred renderings of the *Ramayana* have been identified and terms such as versions and variants have been used to denote them. However, looking into the divergent and pluralistic nature of the narrative traditions, Ramanujan prefers to use the term 'tellings' to denote them. These medieval tellings, many of them radically deviant from the reconstructed original text, seem to perform multiple functions, sometimes mutually antagonistic to each other.

It is highly relevant to probe further the dimensions of different tellings in medieval Indian literary co-text. Each telling probably intended to construct a different cultural view point, but at the same time also affirmed other view points, which were shared by other communities. In this sense, they are attempts to represent various positions reflecting the religious, social, linguistic and regional cultures. At the same time these tellings were probably consumed and appropriated by multiple communities is evident from synchronic evidence available from the performing traditions of such tellings. The processes of participation in such tellings, both at the level of performers, infrastructure providers as well as at the level of audience are always a pluralistic one – multi-religious, multi-caste, multilingual and multi-regional. Thus multiplicity of tellings in medieval India represented not only different view points but also made the communities mutually accommodative ones by sharing the view points of each others. This appears to me to be a

radically different one as compared to a monolithic, original text and its authentic translation, which attempts to eliminate the very possibilities of multiple tellings, firstly by its print media in which it gets transmitted and secondly by establishing a single text or telling as an authentic one.

The possibilities for multiple readings as a continuous on going process and of infinite nature in medieval Indian telling traditions need further exploration. Within the hermeneutic tradition, the multiple readings that are possible on a text and the multiplicity of components that get into its representation and interpretation have been highly debated. In addition to the readings that is possible with in the text, the readings that are possible due to extra-textual field of reference, the readings that are possible due to inter-textual field of reference can result in the production of several re-presentations. If the listeners of the telling tradition is brought into focus here to theorize the relationship between the performers and listeners, then the process of representation and its readings not only become collective but also its re-presentation becomes a continues process and its possibilities are going to be infinite. Tellings in such cultural contexts do not have a hierarchy or power relationship as they could also act as mutual contestants. This is all the more significant if we consider the fact that there always exists a power relationship between the original text and its translation.

It is against the backdrop of this problematization that we need to look at the translation and reception of tragedy in Kannada literature. In this context, the present paper not only urges to look at the medieval Indian processes of tellings in problematizing the translations studies but also interrogates the power and authority that has been acquired by the discipline, both academically and economically.

Any one who tries to take a closer look at the development of drama in different Indian languages is struck by certain conspicuous trends that are more or less common to all of them. First of all, there is a conspicuous absence of a dramatic tradition, marked by the lacuna of written plays till the introduction of the English education system. It was for the needs of this newly educated class that the professional drama companies, based on the model of the

Parsi theatre companies, started adapting and writing new plays with the specific intention of performing them on the stage. This stage, in fact, was then using the conventions of the proscenium theatre from the European continent, which had made inroads into the newly emerging Indian theatre. On the one hand, plays were adapted and translated from the classical source, mainly from Sanskrit, where a long standing dramatic tradition had been claimed to have prevailed. On the other hand, plays were also adapted and translated from English, mostly the plays that the Parsi theatre companies were performing during those days. In addition, new plays were also written, mostly making use of the *Puranic* themes from Indian mythology. Thus the emergence of drama in different Indian languages have an underlaying Orientalist statement that the light to overcome the darkness created by the absence of drama has to be overcome not only by establishing a link with the tradition of Sanskrit drama through constructing its historical and thematic components (the ancient east), but also through establishing a link with the European west (the modern west). It is interesting to note here that several of the newly written plays, though contained *Puranic* themes, followed the conventions of the Parsi theatre, thereby, implying the Western form in its *desi* version, blending with the traditional Indian themes. An interrogation of the choice of the genre, the nature of translations, the selection of the themes, the modifications and transformations incorporated into them in the process of translation and the heated discussions that have taken place around these early experimentations reveal and demonstrate the complexities of an ambivalent society that was trying to blend the western genre with eastern sensibilities and the transitional nature of the newly emerging middle-class society and their world view.

It is against this background that this paper problematizes the emergence of the genre 'tragedy' in Kannada in the form of translations and adaptations and the reception and controversies that surrounded it during the early phase of its experimentation. Though most of the discussion has been confined to the tragedies that Sri (B.M. Srikanthaiya) wrote during the third and the fourth decades of the present century, I have gone beyond this time frame. Firstly, I have probed the period prior to the beginning of theatre

movement in the Kannada speaking regions during the later part of the nineteenth century and subsequently, to the later period, which involved the controversies following the introduction of the tragedies in Kannada literary and drama spheres. The paper has four parts. In the first part, an introductory background for the study of translations and reception of tragedies has been outlined. The second part deals with the three translated / adapted texts of Sri and the controversies that surrounded them. The third part brings into focus the attempts made by the scholars to construct a history or tradition of tragedy in Indian and Kannada literatures, on the one hand to justify the need for it, and on the other, to show that it is not something totally new to the Indian world view. In the last part, an attempt has been made to show how it is actually the demands of the theatre and the audience that necessitated the emergence of tragedy in Kannada and the subsequent experimentation and diffusion of the characteristics of the new genre.

1. Sri's three tragedies: *Gadayuddha Natakam*, *Asvatthaman* and *Parasikaru*

Sri wrote three tragic plays namely, *Gadayuddha natakam*, *Asvatthaman* and *Parasikaru*. In the first one, Sri had tried to adapt Ranna's *Gadayuddha*, a tenth century Jaina epic in Campu style, to the form of a Greek tragedy. *Asvatthaman* is an adaptation based on Sophocles's Greek tragedy *Ajax* and *Parasikaru* is a translation of Aeschylus's Greek tragedy *Persians*. *Parasikaru* has been excluded from the discussion here because as a straight forward translation it did not generate the type of controversy that the other two plays have generated and thus is not relevant for the discussion undertaken here. Sitharamaiya points out that Sri also had a plan to adapt Euripidis's *Bacchae* into Kannada to write a tragedy involving Krishna as the main character. However, he appears to have hesitated over such an attempt following the controversies raised on *Asvatthaman* and subsequently abandoned the idea. *Gadayuddha nataka* should be seen as an attempt by Sri to explore the possibilities of adapting the technicalities of Greek tragedy to themes from Indian mythology. It is an experimentation similar to his *Inglis gitagalu* (1921), a translation/adaptation of English romantic poetry into Kannada. Kulakarni claims that Sri himself

had given the analogy of 'the damsel in distress' to the tragedy that is hidden in Ranna's epic *Gadayuddha* and his own role as 'Prince Charming' in rescuing it from the holds of the tenth century epic.

It may not be just accidental that Rama's Duryodhana, being modeled on the *Jaina pratinayaka* model (*dhiroddhata* type), and having inherent characteristics of becoming a tragic hero, provided an ideal opportunity for such an experimentation. Moreover, Ranna's epic itself is composed in a dramatic framework. Its dialogue oriented nature rather than epic narration, the actions and situations that are appropriate to a play, the existence of the character of *Vidusaka* that usually is absent in the *Campu* epic tradition adds further justification to the claim that Ranna himself might have planned it to be a play first, but subsequently decided to write it as a *Campu* epic. However, it is only a speculation and it is difficult to get convinced by this argument as the genre drama itself is conspicuously absent not only in ancient and medieval Kannada literature but also in other regional literatures of India.

With regard to the success that Sri achieved in adapting Ranna's *Gadayuddha* into Greek tragedy, the following observation of Ranganna is noteworthy.

"In several aspects like the constitution of plot, characterization, temporal sequencing and ambition, *Gadayuddha nataka* follows the pattern of a Greek tragedy right from the beginning to the end... If a chorus had been introduced and scenes like showing the clash, collapse of a character on the stage after having lost the consciousness, kicking the headgear of the opponent and the death had been avoided, this play would have become a perfect example of Greek tragedy."

Critics have noticed that in *Gadayuddha nataka* the three unities – time, place and action – have been strictly followed. However, what makes a significant difference between Ranna's epic and Sri's tragic play is the way that Sri has depicted the character of Duryodhana. In Ranna, as far as his hero is concerned, the intentions of the author and its materialization in the epic are crystal clear. First of all, the second title with which the epic has been associated is *Sahasabhima vijayam*, where *Sahasabhima* is the

epithet for the Chalukya King Satyashraya, who was also the patron of the poet. '*Satyasraya-deva-ne prthvivallabham kathanayakanage-anilajan-ol polisi pelden-i Gadayuddhamam kavi rannam*' (Satyasrayadeva, the husband of the earth being the hero, comparing him with anilaja (Bhima) Kavi Ranna told (narrated) this *Gadayuddha*), claims Ranna in unambiguous terms and ends his epic in the anointment (*patta-bandha mahotsva*) of Bhima. Whereas in *Gadayuddha nataka*, not only this end is absent but also that Bhima and Krishna have been given a lesser importance. At the same time, Duryodhana has been characterized as a tragic hero. These changes have triggered serious criticisms on Sri's attempt and the arguments have taken place both against and in defence of the changes incorporated by Sri.

Commenting on these transformations in *Gadayuddha nataka*, Ranganna observes that there could be two reasons for this. Firstly, the love that Sri had towards Greek tragedy and his desire to experiment and see whether it is possible to adapt Ranna's *Gadayuddha* into the format of Greek tragedy. Secondly, his attempt to elevate Duryodhana to the status of a tragic hero in the play.

Ranganna does not appear to be against Duryodhana being transformed into a tragic hero, which has been perceived to be a process of elevation. However, he appears to be not too happy about the way Sri has transformed the characters of Bhima and Krishna, which has been perceived as a process of demotion of the mythical characters. Ranganna further observes that 'the greatness of the character of Duryodhana would not have suffered even if Bhima and Krishna have been depicted as the ones who possess good nature (*sadguni*), as they have been depicted in the epic, or at least, have been depicted as a little more dignified (*udatta*). Bendre was one of the critics who strongly criticized such transformations. In an article entitled '*Duryodhananu durantanayakane?*' (Is Duryodhana a tragic hero?), Bendre argued that there is enough of evidence with the Ranna to justify the way Duryodhana gets treated by Bhima in the epic (particularly the *uru bangha* and the *makuta bhanga* episodes). He further argues that on moralistic grounds Duryodhana does not deserve to be treated as a dignified tragic hero.

Kulakarni has reacted to the different positions taken in favour of Sri's transformations. Although he disagrees with the fact that Ranna ever had any such intention of projecting Duryodhana as a *udatta* character in his epic, he points out that several critics who tried to argue that Virakaurava is the actual hero of *Gadayuddha*, that he is full of *udatta guna* and that his *chala* (notoriety) is the only the weakness that Kaurava had in him. Contrarily Bhima had been claimed by the same critics to be devoid of *udatta guna*, an *adharmi* and *avanita*. However, it needs to be pointed out here that there are significant deviations in the characterization of Duryodhana in Pampa's *Vikramarjuna Vijayam* (a *Campu* epic which pre-dates Ranna's epic and critics have already pointed out Ranna's indebtedness to Pampa in writing his own) and Ranna's *Gadayuddha* (*Sahasabhima Vijaya*) as compared to Vyasa's *Mahabharata*. The very fact that the two writers were Jains and have depicted their *pratinayakas* to suit the conventions of their religion might have contributed towards an *udatta* and humane Duryodhana in their epics. Similarly, Nagachandra's Ravana in the *Jaina Ramayana Ramachandra carita puranam* (c. 1100 A.D.) has been considered to be a tragic hero and Ravana has been considered to be one among the sixty-three *Salakapurusas* that the Jains revere. Kulakarni's observations substantiate the point discussed above.

"If we compare the story of Gada-Sauptika Parva from Vyasa's *Mahabharata* and that from *Pampabharata* and *Gadayuddha*, Pampa-Ranna's Duryodhana excels Vyasa's Duryodhana by his *udatta* and humanitarian aspects. Further, Sri's Duryodhana far excels that of Pampa-Ranna in these aspects. It might be possible, for these very reasons, that many critics tend to believe that Ranna's Duryodhana is too *udatta* a character and thus the real hero of his epic."

In fact, Sri's attempts appear to have triggered several such attempts of transforming the *pratinayakas* of the ancient epics into tragic heroes. Apart from Sri's tragedies, V. Sitharamaiya's *Agraha*, which appears like a slightly corrected version of Sri's *Asvatthamam* and *Sohrab-Rustum*, C.K. Venkataramaiya's *Mandodari* and *Nachiketa*, G.P. Rajaratnam's translation of T.P. Kailasam's *Kicaka* and Samsa's *Vigadavikramaraya* are some of the tragedies which followed the path that Sri had newly introduced

in Kannada literature. Raghavachar has translated Aeschylus's *Agamemnon*, Sophocles's *The Oedipus Tyrannus* and Aristophanes's *The Frogs* into Kannada where he has tried to use a similar style that Sri has used in his tragedies. In addition it should be pointed out that he has also translated Sophocles's *Antigone* and *Oedipus at Colonus* into Kannada and his translation of *Antigone* appears to be the earliest Indian translation of the text.

Asvatthaman appears to have created the highest degree of controversy among the critics. It is actually the suicide that Ashvatthama commits towards the end of the play which has become the controversial point. Although this suicide is justified keeping in mind the characteristics of the Greek tragedy and its source play *Ajax*, where the tragic hero commits suicide as he has been refused the right to own the weapons of Hector and the subsequent events that follow. However, in the case of *Asvatthaman* the controversy seems to have arisen due to the fact that Ashvatthama, who is considered to be an eternal entity (*ciranjivi*) has been made to commit suicide in the play. Kurtukoti's evaluation of Sri's attempts involves admiration for his achievements, and at the same time, expresses strong resentment for the lack of cultural responsibility.

"Sri, in an attempt to frame his plays on the model of the Greek tragedy, also incorporated the world view of the Greek tragedies in his plays. Although there are certain limitations and problems in the adaptation of Greek tragic tradition to Indian mythological themes, his *Asvatthaman* remains as a brilliant play. A radiance (*ojas*) could clearly be seen in the heroic-tragic actions of Ashvatthama. The poetic excellence in the songs of the chorus makes the essence of the play to be supernatural in content. The lightening brilliance that could be seen in several of his poems (*Inglis gitagalu*) could be seen here too. However, this poetic glitter has also brought in certain flaws into the mythological morality (*pauranika niti*). Can we consider as right the greatness (*udattate*) given to Ashvatthama and his heroic deaths to be moral necessities of the play? Isn't there a *alaukika kavya* present in the *anudattate* of the *Puranic* Ashvatthama? Has the radiance of

the villains like Duryodhana and Iago have become the theme of poetry (*kavya-vastu*) any where else in the world?"

1. In defence of tragedy

The type of experimentation on tragedy that Sri and his followers undertook was at a time in which the country had been placed under a peculiar cultural condition. This involved a series of ambivalences with which the Indian newly educated class had to cope with. It is a sort of love-hate relationship with the new genres for which they were responding, with a consequent and apparently contradiction. The first ambivalence is towards the very system in which they were the agents, towards which they were having an admiration, particularly towards the colonial knowledge system, its art and literature but at the same time, were opposed to the colonial rule. The second was the nation building agenda expressed through love for the motherland and its arts and literature, but at the same time, had a critical attitude towards its degenerated and dogmatic institutions. The third one involved a simultaneous agenda of building the region and the nation together and to provide a respectable position to the language, arts and literature of the region. This entrepreneur was a difficult task indeed, but the writers, critics and readers were able to synthesize and handle harmoniously all the three agenda through a series of complex maneuvers. In this section I have attempted to outline some of these attempts.

I have categorized these maneuvers broadly into three types of literary activities. The first one consists of activities in which critics tried to demonstrate that there is nothing wrong in doing modifications to the *Puranic* characters, like what Sri did for Duryodhana and Ashvatthaman. In other words, these attempts aimed at finding support from ancient and medieval Indian literature, both from Sanskrit and Kannada, to show that the tragic elements were not totally alien to us and could be found in ancient India. As the term *duranta vastu vinyasa* (the tragic theme design) repeatedly appears in such attempts, I have called this position as a mission to search for the tragic theme designs in Sanskrit and Kannada literatures. Sri himself had done extensive work in this regard is evident from the fact that even before attempting to adapt

Gadayuddha natakam, he had written a long article on the theme of 'A tragic Ravana'. He had dealt in detail as to how Ravana had been depicted as a tragic hero in Nagachandra's *Ramachandra charita purana*, written in the Hoysala court of Vishnuvardhana around 1100 A.D. In this paper, stressing the need for a sympathetic treatment of Ravana and pointing out that such a treatment could be found in our own literary tradition, Sri argued as follows:

"Such a sympathetic treatment of the character of Ravana, it is perhaps ideal to expect in the ancient and the medieval Hindu atmosphere of India. From an independent and critical writer, however, such a thing was possible: indeed it had been done. Not quite with the freedom of a Western poet, perhaps, yet sufficiently distinct to arrest the attention and to refresh the imagination of a reader who longs for a new, a tragic Ravana."

Apart from the zeal to demonstrate the existence of a tragic Ravana in an ancient Kannada epic, Sri also has suggested that such an imagination, though appears to be Western in nature is not only Indian but also has come from its historical past. It was equally important for Sri to convince others that tragedy is not something new to the Indian mind but also has long-standing traditional links. In a lecture delivered on '*rudranataka*', he points out that there are plenty of instances of such tragic theme designs in Indian literature.

"If one cares to observe, it is not that there is no feeling of experience of sorrow (*dukhanubhava*), life in death (*amrtatva* in *mrtyu*) and the knowledge that the divine delight ('*anandamaya devatamsa*') can exist in the human sorrow ('*duhkhi manava*'). We have them in plenty, to the extent that we can lend it to the other world. Poets too have amply reflected/depicted this secret of sorrowing ('*duhkharahasya*') in their poetry."

Subsequently, several attempts have been made by the scholars to reevaluate the '*pratinayakas*' of the *Jaina* epics as tragic heroes. Attempts have also been made to demonstrate the existence of tragic Ravana, tragic Karna, tragic Kichaka in medieval Kannada epics. Commenting on such attempts Kurtukoti observes as follows:

"After Ranna's Duryodhana got his resurrection ('*pratyabhignana*') from our critics, the villains ('*khalas*') of our *Puranas* are becoming dignified and getting elevated as '*udatta*' characters. However, the responsibilities of these changes are significantly high. Particularly, when sentimentality ('*bhavana-vasate*') becomes the root cause of this dignification process, it has brought in several complications".

Despite all these controversies, Sri's experimentations on tragedy have been considered to be a significant contribution to the development of Kannada drama. At the same time, it deserves to be mentioned that his love for Kannada and his eagerness to bring in new genres have never led to any sort of artistic and aesthetic compromises. Even the harshest critics of Sri have only pointed out the cultural and moral inappropriateness of transforming Duryodhana and Ashvatthama as tragic heroes. However, it is the poetic eye and skills of Sri which were able to locate a tragic Duryodhana in the epic of Ranna and Ajax in *Ashvatthaman* which makes his contribution a highly significant one. They are not only attempts of grafting a new genre for Kannada but also have provided an ideal model for adaptations and translations. The consequences of Sri's efforts had far reaching effects on modern Kannada literature. He has not only been responsible for a subsequent good crop of tragic plays in Kannada but also has stimulated a thorough search for tragic elements in ancient and medieval Kannada literature.

In his article on '*rudranataka*' Sri has made a single line reference to the way in which a tragic Vyasa's *Sakuntalopakhyan* has become a '*mangalanta*' play in Kalidasa's *Abhignana sakuntalam*. As though a response to this statement, T.N. Srikanthaiya in an excellent and lengthy article written in Kannada, '*Kalidasana natakagalalli duranta vastuvinyasa*' (the tragic theme design in the plays of Kalidasa) thoroughly explores the tragic elements integral to *Vikramorvasiyan*, and *Abhignana sakuntalam*. Similarly Marulusiddhappa's survey article, '*Kannada natakagalalli duranta vastuvinyasa*' (the tragic theme design in Kannada dramas), which actually came much after the entire controversy had cooled down, still continues the search for tragic

themes that was triggered during the 1940s. This suggests that the tradition which was started by Sri and his associates in the 1920s still continues to have its effect, at least indirectly.

The second category of activities aimed at developing a body of critical evaluations of tragic plays written in Kannada. It appears that the intention behind this exercise was to make the readers aware of the conventions of the genre of tragedy and to equip them with sensibilities so that they can appreciate it. In particular, it is the way that '*khalanayakas*' like Duryodhana have been elevated to the level of the tragic hero and the death of Asvatthama, who otherwise does not have a death, which appears to have threatened to disturb the world-order ('*niyati*') and caused concerns in the mind of the so called conservative critics. The very fact that the source for such experimentations were non-native in their origin and was coming from a foreign source might have been another strong reason for such resentments. We have already seen earlier in the first category of activities, how through delivering lectures and writing articles, the advocates of the tragedy made their attempts to establish a long standing tradition of tragic elements in Indian literature. In the second category of activities, the critics tried to demonstrate how these new tragedies can be understood and appreciated. In fact, it was an effort to create an awareness among the readers and viewers regarding the characteristics and conventions of the Greek tragedy, so that they can learn to appreciate them not only as literary texts but also as performances. The very fact that many of these plays were written specifically for stage performances and the fact that the critical evaluations included both the literary and theatrical aspect of the plays, suggests a consolidated effort made by the critics in this regard. Two such critical evaluations, appreciating the significance of *Asvatthaman* have been published by Anantharangachar and Sitharamaiya. They have contributed significantly towards a better understanding and reception of *Asvatthaman* as a tragic play on the one hand, and tragedy as a genre on the other. Later on, Sitaramaiya himself wrote two tragedies *Agraha* and *Sohrab-Rustum* to further substantiate his points. Similarly, Rajaratnam wrote a critical evaluation of Samsa's *Vigadavikramaraya*, a historical tragedy based on the history of the Wodeyar dynasty of Mysore. It has been convincingly argued here,

how Vigadavikrama, a '*dhiroddhata*' character, akin to Ravana, Duryodhana, Karna and Ashvatthama, provides an opportunity and scope for the complete exposition of '*dhirodatta*' and '*dhiralalita*' heroes. Rajaratnam (n.d) has also done a similar type of evaluation of T.P. Kailasam's tragedy on *Kicaka*. This attempt is highly interesting for two reasons. First of all, it provides an idea of how the play was conceived in its English original as it is not available to us today. Secondly, the Kannada translation and the critical evaluation of the play provide insightful arguments in justification of transforming *Kicaka* as a tragic hero.

It is interesting to note here that attempts to consider Bhasa's *Urubangha* as a tragedy and thereby to establish a historical link between the modern Kannada tragedies and the Sanskrit drama have also been apparently made. The fact that T.N. Srikanthaiya seems to have been clearly aware of such attempts is clearly evident in his work. However, he is also aware of the fact that scholars like A.B. Keith are not really inclined to consider such a possibility. In subsequent years, though this did not prevent the Kannada scholars from postulating the possibility of establishing a link between modern Kannada tragedy and *Urubangha*. However, it appears that rather than the classical Sanskrit drama, it is the folk theatre which had several tragic plays. In addition, it also has plays which have a structure like that of *Urubangha*. The third category of activities consists of exploring the possibilities of providing evidences for the existence of tragedies in Kannada folk theatre. Though not much work has been done in this direction, it can be pointed out that despite the absence of a tradition. At the same time, demonstration of the availability of '*dhiroddhata*' characters in the folk plays in abundance can make the claim of this position more strong and convincing. Moreover, the existence of well-definable tragedies in folk theatre (c.f. *Sangya-balya*) adds further justification to this position. Although the study of Kannada folk theatre started much later (post 1970s), and a systematic attempt has not yet been made in this regard, its possibilities had been hinted during the early phase of the tragedy controversy itself. Poddara observes that among many folk plays that are performed in Kannada, '*Kumararamana ata*' ('ata' = play, fame; Kumararama is a historical hero, well-depicted in Kannada literature and folklore),

'Dakshabrahmana ata' and 'Sangya-balyana ata' can be considered as tragedies ('rudranataka'). Apart from this suggestion no serious subsequent attempt was made to undertake a systematic study to explore this possibility. By the time the folklore studies started in Kannada the issue of establishing a folk link for the tragedy was no more a serious necessity.

Literary historians over the subsequent years have either tended to forget the strong resentments expressed over Sri's thematic transformations or have taken them for granted. This is evident from the conspicuous absence of discussions about this issue in the subsequent period. In fact, both the writing of these tragedies and the resentments as well as defences that followed it were confined to the romantic phase of modern Kannada literature, the *Navodaya* period. The modernist (*Navya*) critics, mostly anti-*navodaya* on the one hand and anti-traditional on the other, did not seem to have bothered over the thematic transformations. Marulusiddhappa in his survey article, 'the tragic theme design in Kannada dramas' observes that through his three tragedies Sri attempted to provide three different modes of strategies for the Kannada drama.

"The three tragic plays that Sri wrote provided three different models for Kannada plays. *Ashvatthaman* is an attempt towards adaptation of *Ajax*. *Parasikaru* is an attempt towards translation and *Gadayuddhanataka* is an attempt to render Ranna's epic into a tragedy based on the model of the Greek tragedy."

In this connection it is interesting to point out that Kurthukoti, who earlier in 1957 had expressed serious concerns that 'the villains of our *Puranas* (*khalas*) are becoming dignified and getting elevated as 'udatta' characters', endorsed a much more moderate position and that too wholeheartedly over a period of time. Consider this statement from his recent criticism:

"A literary work like *Asvatthaman* might have been a controversial one. Some scholars might have expressed whether it was appropriate to make Ashvatthama die for the sake of tragedy? But if someone questions like that, then it implies that he is a conservative. In fact, during those years of controversy, the conservative position was one of the

verge of loosing its battle. Controversy in this sense, is actually is a progressive step. Now the controversy does not exist any more. Be it the *Puranic 'ciranjivatava'* of Ashvatthama or his death in the tragedy have today remained only as problems of art and literature. Moreover, after the realization that if Ashvatthama dies in a tragedy it is not obligatory that he also has to die in *Mahabharata*, the controversy surrounding his death has become virtually irrelevant today."

The culmination point of heat and interest generated by tragedy is demonstrated in an exhaustive survey of Western tragedy undertaken by Ranganna under the title *Pascatya gambhira natakagalu*. This monumental work, started as early as 1958 in the form of three lectures to be delivered subsequently grew into a huge volume running into nearly 1250 pages. The book in six parts consists of an extensive survey of tragedies right from Aeschylus to Beckett. In his preface Ranganna states as follows:

"The purpose of the book is to introduce the experimentations done by different tragedy writers and an outline of the different conceptualizations of tragedy that they had."

Murthirao's survey of Shakespeare and Balurao's edited volume on Shakespeare appeared around this time. This is not to suggest that the assimilation of tragedy in Kannada literature was complete and uniform. On the other hand, it was quite the contrary to it and differences continued for a long time. The Kannada terms given in Nagabhushanaswamy will act as an indicator as to how the tragedy was perceived differently and at variance: Where as Sri preferred the term '*rudranataka*' for it, Bendre wanted to use the term like '*aviddhanataka*'. Ranganna, who did an extensive survey of Western tragedies choose '*gambhiranataka*' as the appropriate term. Despite such heated debates, scholars tend to use '*durantanataka*' as the standard term for tragedy now a days.

1. Theatre tradition and tragedy

In the beginning of the paper, I briefly touched upon the issue of a lacuna of written plays and that the practice of writing plays in

Indian languages started with the influence of the Parasi theatre companies. Like other written plays, tragedies too have a close association with the theatre movements in Kannada. Hence, it would be appropriate to understand the development of tragedy in the context of theatre movements, professional, amateur and folk theatre movements.

A folk theatre performing troop (*Yakshagana*) has been claimed to have been associated with the royal court of Mysore from 1812 itself. Similarly the visit of the *Yakshagana* troop from Karki to the royal court of Baroda suggests the prevailing practices of the eighteenth century, where the folk performing traditions from one region used to visit the neighboring regions and that the royal courts played a significant role in the emergence of the new genres. However, the historians of Kannada theatre have pointed out that it was the visits of the Sangali Nataka Mandali and Victoria Parasi Company from the Marathi speaking regions during the period 1877-78, that the new type of theatre activity started in the princely state of Mysore and North Karnataka. Accordingly, to cater to the needs of the new theatre troop at the royal court of Mysore (which subsequently became Sri Chamarajendra Karnataka Nataka Sabha), the early Kannada plays were written. Basavappa Shastri's *Sakuntala* (1881) and *Surasena carite* (1895), an adaptation of *Othello*, were thus specifically written for the purpose of performing them on the stage. Similarly, in the North Karnataka region, frequently visiting Marathi theater companies had triggered the new theater activity as well as the writing of plays in Kannada. Thus Shantakavi's Karnataka Nataka Company started its activities in 1874.

As Parsi theatre companies and the Marathi theatre companies were performing the adaptations of Shakespearean tragedies, the Kannada theatre companies initially attempted to adapt them into Kannada. This is why in which, for the first time, the Kannada audience community was exposed to Western tragedy as a genre. If we look at the number of adaptations of Shakespearean tragedies undertaken during this early phase (1880-1900), the following interesting figures emerge (information based on Balurao 1966): *Romeo and Juliet* four times; *Othello* and *Macbeth* twice each. Apart from the numbers, what is interesting in these adaptations is

that many of them, in their Kannada adaptations, did not possess a tragic ending at all. *Ramavarma-lilavati caritre* (*Romeo and Juliet*) by Ananadarao and Jayarajacharya had an ending in which at the end (similar to 'mangalacarane' of the folk theatre), every one prayed to God requesting him to bring back to life both Ramavarma and Lilavati. The play ends in their marriage. Similarly, Basavappa Shastri's adaptation of *Othello*, *Surasena caritre* (1895) also had a happy ending.

Although it is not possible here for me to go through all the cases of the tragedies which were made to end with a happy ending during the phase of the company theatres, it however suggests the nature of reception that these tragedies had during the early phase. As the performances of theatre companies were tuned to the masses rather than the educated ones, both the audience and writers were not in a position to appreciate and internalize the characteristics of the genre of tragedy. This aspect obviously must have necessitated the tragic ending being transformed to a happy ending, in conformity with the then prevailing local theatre traditions. However, with the emergence of the amateur theatre groups, which constituted mostly the English educated middle class, an awareness had already been created for the reception of the tragedy. In fact, it was these amateur theatre groups who undertook the responsibility of staging the early experimental tragedies. In this connection, we should note here that Sri's *Gadayuddha natakam* was written specifically for the purpose of staging it as a performance. Subsequently the tragedies appear to have become popular, even among the company theatre groups and some of the leading actors like Ramaraya, Varadacharaya, Mahammad Peer used to perform highly popular tragic roles. Moreover, the translations and adaptations during the early part of twentieth century, be it for company theatres or for amateur theatre groups, have been undertaken by the popular and acclaimed Kannada writers of that period. Most importantly, as both the writers and audience were active participants of the controversy discussed in section 2 and 3, the genre of tragedy was able to find its acceptance both in the literary and theatre worlds. The acceptance went to the extent, as noted by Kurtukoti "the controversy surrounding his (Ashvatthama) death has become irrelevant today."

Apart from its acceptance, the tragedy also appears to have trained both the performers and audience to be receptive to tragic characters like Duryodhana, Ravana, Harishchandra and Karna. It is important to note here that these characters were transformed from their mythological shield to become tragic heroes. It has already pointed out that such '*dhiroddhata*' characters are found frequently in the Jaina epics and that a Ravana in the Jaina epic is also one among the revered sixty-three '*Salakapurusa*'. If one looks at the folk theatre of Karnataka and Yaksagana, the importance in terms of costumes, characterizations, and the popularity that these characters have been enjoying, in particularly, Ravana, Duryodhana, Karna and Harishchandra, makes this point further clear. The head gear and the costume that these character wear (*kedige mundasu* and *raksasa vesa*) are suggestive of the importance that these characters command in *Yaksagana* performances. The visual documentation of *Yaksagana* performance that is available to us from the early part of the twentieth century suggests that it did not possess many of the spectacular aspect that it posses today. In which case, there is possibility for exploring the role of newly introduced tragic performing traditions in such transformations. In this connection, it is interesting to point out that a majority of the *Yakshagana* performances consists of themes which end in the '*vadha*' of a '*dhiroddhata*' character or consists of a '*kalaga*' (battle) of a '*dhiroddhata*' character. As many as 27/69 titles which Karantha mentions constitutes either a '*kalaga*' or a '*vadha*' of the '*dhiroddhata pratinayaka*'. On the other hand, the plays celebrating the '*vijaya*' of the heroes are conspicuously absent.

This suggests that the folk theatre of *Yakshagana* has contributed in its own way towards the emergence of the concept of tragedy in *Yakshagana* performance. However, some of the performances of company theatres too might have added their own contribution such an impact. In fact, *Danasurakarna*, a play in which Karna has been depicted as a tragic hero has continued to remain as one the most popular company plays and is being performed even to this day. In particular, Kotturappa's performance as Karna has been considered to be a highly memorable experience. He was so popular, that during pre-T.V. and video days, the

gramophone disks of *Danasurakarna* use to be heard in the village fairs all over Karnataka. Whether Sri is directly responsible for all these changes or not is not relevant here. The early translations of tragedies. The role played by Sri and his associates, the literary critics who took part in the controversy, the advocates of tragedy who attempted to write about the plays and about tragedy itself, thus refining the sensibilities of the public, the performing traditions that were in currency at that time all appears to have taken part in the process of change. However, the elements of tragedy appear to have diffused across the social and spatial dimensions of Karnataka, by making use of all the possible components of performing traditions, the local and the western but at the same time enriching the taste of the performers and audience alike, ultimately to become an integral part of the new world view. Thus the change in sensibilities is a highly complex process and is multi-directional and as long as we do not consider these absorptions as contagious and polluting, the emergence of new forms like tragedy could also be seen as continually evolving systems. The processes of change and adjustments are not thus in the literary text but at the level of culture where people of diverse background take part in such changes. It is in this sense that we need to understand translation as a process of cultural production and consumption rather than as a literary one.

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An On-line Lexicographic Tool for Translation

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Introduction

Language is a socio-intellectual aspect of a community, the use of which in education and administration would ensure maximum qualitative and quantitative progress. In this regard, Indian languages fall short of the basic requirements to be effective in the above areas. Language use in India presents peculiar designs, as we find a native language is used for schooling, English in higher studies and a governmental native variety (henceforth GNL) for work at office as there are alternative combinations of these three languages/varieties. The effects of such hazardous set ups are not tangible to assess easily. But minimizing the efforts, energy and time by using a single language (in important areas) will produce greater intelligibility and creativity as it is the nearest (perhaps equal) to one's knowledge faculty.

The Present State of Indian Languages

A simple investigation of Indian languages in regard to their use reveals that the use of these languages is invariably confined to the day-to-day household life. These backward class of languages are found unsuitable in the areas of education or administration. These are the scheduled languages (SL) enlisted in the constitution are entitled to receive government aids. As a result a new variety of language has emerged which we have already mentioned as GNL. We have reasons to call this variety as the outcome of unplanned and irrational efforts of government.

In the national level and at state levels, government has created various agencies with the aim of large scale "production of terms" in Hindi and other scheduled languages in order to boost their development. These agencies have produced large-scale glossaries in various SLs on Science, Technology and Administration. Now, it

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is evident that the terms produced in these glossaries are slowly creeping into the process of translation/transformation of knowledge into Indian languages. A study of these glossaries and their subsequent effect on SLs would force us to assume that Indian languages are going to face a linguistics disaster which would paralyse all of them in every respect. Our assumptions are based on the following facts embodied in the glossaries.

- The terms produced are incompatible with the concerned languages. The incompatibility is both phonological and morphological.
- There is a high degree of contradiction in the use of phonological and morphological subcomponents.
- Careless use of components in compound words which violates syntactic and semantic orders.
- Use of a simple word of target language for more (at times five to six) than one word of the source language.
- Elimination of well accepted nativised borrowed words.
- Indiscriminate use of tautological elements.

It is highly essential now to realize the harmfulness of such glossaries and unqualified "term production agencies" can cause.

Role of translation in developing Indian languages

Translation will be the most viable mechanism which can bring life back into Indian languages, enable them to keep pace with modern science and technology. To attain this objective translation tools should be designed according to the requirements prevailing in Indian languages at present. To develop one such tool from the scratch we can propose a two-staged development of a lexicographic tool for translators. In the first stage the translators will play a major role in determining the layouts of the elements of such tool minutely. In the second stage these layouts will be further established by a method of convergence which can function as a guiding tool for translators.

Format of an On-line Lexicographic Tool

The preparation of an on-line lexicographic tool is to be constructed by a translator or a group of translators on translation.

The Procedure

Step I

1. List all the terms / words of the source text in separate spaces.
2. Arrange them alphabetically.
3. Provide each term /word enlisted at (1) with the help of existing dictionaries or existing literature.
4. If (3) is not adequate, then search for the equivalents in the languages related to the target language.
5. If (4) is not adequate, then search for the equivalent in the parent language of the target language.
6. If (5) is not adequate, borrow the term.

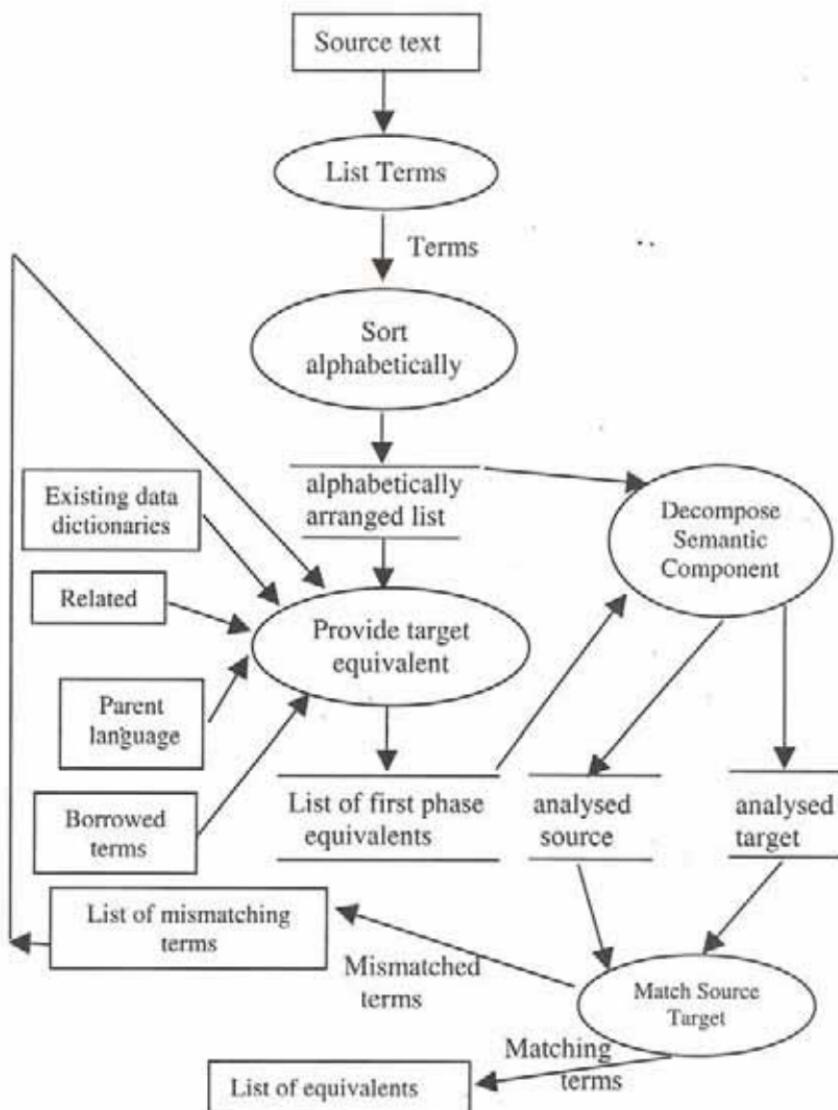
Step II

1. Decompose the semantic components of the terms/words along with citations as work progresses.
2. Do the similar activity with the target equivalents
3. Determine the mismatching cases.
4. Search and find out the required target equivalents for the preceding case.
5. Apply 1-2 to 3 for further enrichment of terminologies.

Step III

1. Determine synonyms, antonyms, inclusives and exclusives of 3 of step-I.
2. Make necessary changes in 3 of step I.

These interactive modules will be a powerful tool to provide valuable clues in determining the structure of equivalence. We present a diagrammatic form of this procedure as follows:



These on-line lexicographic tools should be prepared for various texts pertaining to different subjects. Once this stage is completed, the different on-line lexicographic tools should be converged in the second stage of the process. At this stage a finer relatively stable lexicographic tool can be produced for the purpose of translation and translators.

Conclusion

The proposal given above for the development of a translation tool is undoubtedly time consuming. But there are hardly any short cut approaches possible to overcome the problems encountered in the GNL variety.

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Translating Poetry: Interface with Emily Dickinson's Poems

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Translating poetry, successfully, is considered difficult, or even impossible (George Steiner), universally. There have been innumerable theories coming up every now and then. Translators have taken up this task for about 2000 years, each age with its own theories, and yet, there is no clear-cut 'prescription' as to how to translate poetry. Researchers and scholars, of late, however, do not think in terms of "prescriptive/normative" theories, but in terms of descriptive/empirical methods, and eclectic approach to translation. Views on the translation of poetry have ranged from translating poems into prosaic paraphrases (Vladimir Nabokov) to 'verse to verse' poetic translations. Absolute fidelity to the source text, in every aspect, is the other extreme and any translation less than that is considered a compromise.

"Poetry translation has been called the art of compromise and its success will always be a question of degree."

However, translation as transfer from language to language, text to text, and culture to culture, and even from "existential state to state" as Boylan puts it, will continue to engage people and give them the pleasure of experiencing a new creation. They will also offer readers and critics of translation food for thought. The activity of translation occurs through an interface, the translator, whose interpretation also matters a lot, in poetic translations. All the translations do not get compared with the source texts, not at least microscopically, as it usually happens with poetry, because the poems are small in size, and compact in expression. Nobody tries to compare the translation of a novel line by line. This is only the business of scholars of translation studies, as the target language readers would just continue to enjoy translated poetry as if it was a new poetic experience in their own language.

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As first translation theory to prescribe rules, or guide a translator, I would be inclined to subscribe to the view expressed by about theorization as an integral part of translational competence. "Although every translator needs to know a good deal about grammar, rhetoric, terminology, world knowledge, common sense, and strategies for getting paid correctly, the specifically translational part of their practice is strictly neither linguistic, commonsense, nor commercial. It is a process of generating and selecting alternative texts."

This definition recognizes that there is a mode of implicit theorization within translational practice, since the generation of the alternative translation theories depends on a series of at least intuitively applied hypotheses. The theorization may or may not become explicit but the ability to develop and manipulate hypothetical translation theories is an essential part of translational competence. Robert de Beaugrande (in press), calls this competence, 'translatability': "both theory and practice of translation might profit by centering upon the conception of translatability, defined as the dialectical interaction between what would be required of translators and what actually gets achieved... a bi-directional vision of translator ability: the ways in which competent translators can perform and do perform, as well as how their performance can affect and develop their competencies". This same bi-directional vision and activity of the translator can be seen as the "interface".

The concept of translatability implies that every translator does know and have his/her own theory of translation, and keeps revising it as and when he/she realizes that there is a need for a revision. Beaugrande mentions it in his *Factors in a Theory of Poetic Translating* (1978), and promotes practice driven theories rather than abstract prescriptive theories. Most conscious translators try to achieve as much as possible and try to go as close to the original as they can. The translator's effort seeks to maintain the secret essence of the source language and the poem, as well as its structural aspects. Whereas some theorists like Beaugrande assign translatability to the translator ability, others like the Italian poet and translator Italo Calvino trusts that every language has its 'secret essence', and his concept of its translatability is that of its

international communicability, which is quite different from Beaugrande's.

Calvino's American translator, William Weaver believes that a translation should not be approached as a scientific task, but as a creative endeavour. According to Weaver, knowing the author better would help a translator in translating their works more than a theory of translation could. My experience with translating Emily's poems agrees with Weaver's. Before starting the actual translation activity, I read through at least half a dozen biographies of Emily Dickinson.

In my own translations, I have tried to achieve the best possible effects and retain the essence of each poem in question while translating it into the target language Marathi, making the poems more audience based with regard to cultural aspects. The paper, from here on, presents three aspects of my own translation experience with reference to Emily Dickinson's poems namely, linguistic, cultural and managerial.

Translating Emily Dickinson has been an uphill task, not for me alone, but for poets and translators like Paul Celan, (*A Jewish survivor of the Holocaust*), who is himself a notoriously difficult poet to translate. Walker writes: "---could we have the peculiar grammar of Emily Dickinson beside the lyricism of Baudelaire if both poets were constrained to the same language? However, such richness provides difficulty for those who are called upon to translate poetry from one language to another---". However, I am not aware of many other translators trying their hand at Emily's poems.

Emily Dickinson is with no room for argument, one of the greatest and most unusual poets in the history of American literature. At the same time, she is a very difficult poet to understand and interpret, due to the strange punctuation practice, which makes her syntax incomprehensible in many places. Especially, for the purpose of translation, into a language such as Marathi, which is typologically, as well as culturally so different, Emily's poems pose formidable challenges.

Linguistic Interface with Emily's poems:

Linguistic equivalence is the most significant aspect of a translation, and especially, a poetic translation. The linguistic typology of English and Marathi is different in that, Marathi is a verb-ending language and English has the verb in the middle. This changes the positions of various parts of speech and grammatical elements such as the position of the subordinate clauses, the prepositions, and other syntactic elements as well. Each language on the other hand, is loaded heavily with cultural connotations, especially in words and phrases, and one would consider connotative translation as closer to the source than denotative translation. Denotative or literal translation results in disaster, or, at times, it is even impossible as cited in the example below. Therefore, words need to be chosen most carefully, or even they need to be created with appropriate meanings in the context. Just as a dictionary, a thesaurus, or an encyclopaedia would offer a lot of help; no doubt, the translator's interpretation plays a big role in the process of selecting certain words. The syntax plays an equally important role in the interpretation of some expressions. The target language demands syntax, which must suit the idea expressed in the source language text. Even a small problem like the gender of a noun presents a challenge, and the whole sentence/poem, and the notion in the original text needs to be considered afresh.

The example, I would like to cite here, is of the poem, 'The Soul selects her own Society'.

Emily makes use of capital letters for certain special nouns. Marathi has no such system of capital letters. So, what she intended to convey through the capital letters could not be brought out in the Marathi text. Moreover, the gender of 'soul' in Marathi is masculine. In this poem the soul is personified as a woman. The whole treatment of the concept of the soul as a woman would have been impossible for the lack of lexical equivalence in the target language, and the related syntax thereof. Creativity had to be resorted to in this translation. After due thinking, I came to a solution. I coined a new word, the feminine of *aatmaa* as *aatminee* in Marathi and took my translation as close to the original idea as possible. There were other occasions when such decisions resorting

to creativity were necessary. Another example of such a decision was regarding the title of my published book itself. I was particular that I gave an apt title *Malena*, to my book. After spending a good amount of time and mental energy on what would be the most appropriate description of Emily's poems, and what title would be the most befitting for my book of translations, one day it came to me in a most creative moment, like a flash. I called it *Goodharammyaa Emily*. *Goodha* (mysterious) and *Rammya* (entertaining/interesting) are two different adjectives. In Marathi, they do have some association in the context of something mysterious as well as interesting, usually associated with detective stories, or novels. But they are generally used as two separate words and not as a compound word. To describe Emily's poetry, making them into a compound word and in a totally different context, was a creative decision again. Not only does the description *goodharammyaa* mean that she is herself mysterious as well as interesting, but the compound also means that she was interested in the mysteries of the world in an interesting manner.

Regarding syntax in translation, Houbert writes: "The translation process becomes two fold: firstly, the translator needs to detect potential discrepancies and flaws in the original text and understand the meaning they intend to convey...secondly...the translator will undo the syntactic structure of the original text and then formulate the corresponding message in the target language, thus giving the original text added value in terms of both wording and impact".

In the case of Emily's poems, the syntax of the translated poems had to be different due to the typological differences between the source and the target languages. And yet, besides that, keeping the lines in the same length and content did not require any extraordinary effort. The cross-linguistic communicability, or the translatability of her poems made it possible with a kind of ease at times. The following examples demonstrate the fact that her lines were accessible to translation most of the times. This was possible due to the characteristic shorter lines packed with meaning.

Original: no. 1478

Look back on time, with kindly eyes-
He doubtless did his best-

How softly sinks that trembling sun
In Human Nature's West-

Translation: Marathi

*gatakaalaakaDe pahaawa sahrudaytene-
tyaacha sarwaswa laawlay tyaane paNaalaa-
ksaa haluuch buDtoy to tharthartaa suurya
manushya swabhaawaachyaa paschimela*
(capital letters for retroflex sounds)

Word-to-word Glossing:

gonebacktime at be looked kindheartedly-
his all put he stake at-
how softly sinks that trembling sun
human nature of west to

It was possible not only to bring out the essence of the poem in the exact number of lines, but also with good rhyming.

Original: no. 1472

To see the summer sky
Is poetry, though never in a book it lie-
True poems flee-

Translation: Marathi

*unhaaLi aakash nyaahaalna
kaawya aahe, koNtyaahi pustakaat naslela-
kharyaa kavitaa chakwun jaatat-*

Word-to-word Glossing:

The summer sky to see
Poetry is, any book in not has been-
True poems flee-

There were also those poems, which exhausted me completely, and yet, I am not really satisfied with the translation, though the essence is not lost, hopefully.

Original: no. 323

As if I asked a common alms,
 And in my wondering hand
 A Stranger pressed a Kingdom,
 And I, bewildered, stand –
 As if I asked the Orient
 Had it for me a morn-
 And it should lift its purple Dykes,
 And shatter me with Dawn!

Translation: Marathi

*janu kaahi mi saadhaaran bhikshaa maagiti,
 aani maajhyaa utsuk haataat
 saamraajya kombla kunaa anolkhyaana,
 aani mi, bhaambhaawleli, ubhi-
 janu kaahi maagitlaa hota mi puurwaprakhanDa,
 hoti tyachyaajawal maajhyaasaa Thi sakaal-
 aani uchlun ghetiyaa astyaa tyaaane
 aap;yaa jaambhalyaa kumpanbhinti,
 karun shatakhanDit malaa pahaat tejaane!*
 (capital letters for retroflex sounds)

Word-to-word Glossing:

As if I common alms asked,
 And my wondering hands in
 Kingdom pressed some stranger,
 And I, bewildered, stand-
 As if asked had I the Orient,
 Was him with me for a morn-
 And lifted had he
 His purple dykes,
 Making hundred pieced me with dawn glory!!

The typological differences between English and Marathi necessitate some syntactic changes: the prepositions become

postpositions, auxiliary verbs come after the main verb, and the verbs appear at the end of the sentences/lines are much shorter and simpler. Franklin has discussed Paul Celan's translation of Emily's poem, 'Because I could not stop for Death' in a great detail where she has compared his German syntax with the original English, and many other changes he had to make deviating from the original. She has expected 100% fidelity from him and has criticised Celan for not having been able to attain it. I think that such criticism is unfair because one must understand that no two languages in this world are identical. A translation should be able to do justice to the original and should not create something totally different. But a translator has to be granted the flexibility that a target language requires him/her to express and bring out the essence of the original. Expecting 100% fidelity is ignoring the fact that the text is being transferred. It is like expecting an Eskimo to live in an igloo even when he travels to India. Asking for 100% fidelity is being completely unreasonable.

The transfer of phonetic elements from the source into the target language is another myth. Joanna Janecka writes:

"The effect poetry evokes is based on its inner musical value, and thus the translation, to be successful, must function as a poem in the similar way it does in the source language."

It is difficult to agree with her views entirely, reading the sound effects within a translated poem, though it is true that the translated text must also exist as a poem in the target language. Languages select their own set of sounds. Their words do not always resemble in the sound quality, unless they are onomatopoeic. One can understand the expectation that if there are any lines rhyming in the source text, there should be good rhyming lines in the target language text too. Or, if there is alliteration in the source text, then that effect should be achieved in the target language as well. However, it is too much to expect that the same associations through sounds can be evoked in the translated text as in the original. To quote Janecka, "when translating poetry, one has to preserve the artistic associations evoked by the poem as close to the original as possible.

When most of the associations are lost (and the sound associations are the most important of all) the translation turns out to be unsuccessful and fails to the author's intent." To assume that the same sound associations would not mean the same thing to the target language reader. Therefore, only relevant associations in the target language text need to be resorted to, to match the originals, which would please the target language reader. Octavio Paz appears to be more realistic in this context. "The ideal of poetic translation...consists of producing analogous effects with different implements."

In my experience, while translating the poems, rhyming and alliteration happened without much effort. This has created a harmonious effect and many poems sound as if they were written in Marathi as originals. They have also retained the essence and the content of the poems quite well. A couple of examples are as follows:

Original no. 111

The Bee is not afraid of me,
 I know the butterfly.
 The pretty people in the woods
 Receive me cordially.
 The Brooks laugh louder when I come-
 The Breezes madder play;
 Wherefore mine eye silver mists,
 Wherefore, Oh Summer's Day?

Translation: Marathi

Malaa bheet naahi madhmaashi.

*OLakh maajhi phulpaakhraashi.
 Raanaatli hi dekhni manDaLi
 Swaagat kartaat maaza khaashi-*

*Maajhyaa yeNyaane o Dhe khidaltaat-
 Waare dekhil dhumaakuL ghaaltaat,
 Kashaalaa maajhyaa DoLyaat chanderi dhuka,*

Kashaalaa re, unhaaLyaachyaa diwsaa?

[Capitals for retroflex sounds]

Word-to-word Glossing:

Me to fears not the bee.
 Acquaintance my butterfly with.
 Woods from these pretty people
 Welcome do me specially-
 My coming makes brooks laugh louder-
 Breezes madder play;
 Wherefore my eye in silver mist,
 Wherefore Oh, summer's day?

Original: no. 124

In lands I never saw- they say
 Immortal Alps look down-
 Whose bonnets touch the firmament-
 Whose sandals touch the town-
 Meek at whose everlasting feet
 A myriad Daisy play-
 Which Sir, are you and which am I
 Upon an August day?

Translation: Marathi

*asa mhaNtaat- mi kadhi na paahilelyaa dedhaat
 amar Alps ubhe dimaakhaat-
 tyaanche shiraapech gaganaalaa bhiDtaat
 tyaanche joDe nagaraalaa sparshataat.
 Wlneet tyaanchyaa chirantan charaNaashl
 Lakshaawadhi phule astaat ramleli-
 Tyaatle kuThale, mahaashay tumhi an kuThale mi
 Ekhadyaa unhaaLi diwashi?*

Cultural Interface with Emily's Poems:

Translating cultural elements in a translated text is much more difficult. As stated by Alvarez-Vidal, approaching a culture implies beginning a process of translation. "Translation is not the production of a text equivalent to another text, but rather a complex process of rewriting the original which runs parallel both to the overall view of the language, and to the influences and the balance of power that exists between one culture and another. An intercultural approach to translation means to approach it from the point of view that translation is an act of rewriting an original text. It is also to redefine the aesthetic experience of the original culture into target culture. The translator first lives in the source language aesthetic experience and recreate it for the target language readers. This becomes necessary because at times, certain cultural concepts are completely unknown to the readers in another culture. Explanatory notes must be provided along with the translated text. In a novel or a short story, it may be possible to some extent, but in a poem, where the expression is so compact, and meaning needs to be conveyed instantly for its aesthetic impact to remain intact, bringing the original cultural element might create a mental block. In such situations, giving a cultural parallel as a substitute is the best solution. Fortunately, the universal ways of thinking among the humans, usually have parallels in other cultures. Using a parallel cultural substitute makes it easier for the reader, and also keeps the text loyal to both the cultures and their respective languages. Some examples of these choices are as follows:

The concept of judgment after death has a parallel in Chitragupta in the Hindu culture, which was used in the poem: 'Departed to the Judgment a mighty afternoon'. (*ChitraguptaakaDe chaalти zaali ek prachanda dupaar*). Leopard has always been a feminine reference, a feminine image in Emily's poems. In Marathi, a leopard could be a *bibTyaa* (a spotted tiger), or a cheetah, always referred to as a symbol of power and therefore, as masculine. In the poem "Civilization-spurns-the Leopard!" (no. 492), Emily refers to the animal with a pronoun 'her', but in my translations, I have referred to the animal as 'him'. Most culture specific references have been adapted to suit the Marathi language, because any choices to the contrary would not have made the translations look natural in Marathi. I would prefer my translations to look natural

than otherwise. Attitudes, social customs and traditions, and spiritual matters have been also naturalized. That way, the translations can be received better in a cultural community. For example, references to costume, household objects etc., had to be suitable to appear good and relevant in Marathi.

Managerial Interface with Emily's Poems:

These decisions discussed earlier were some of the managerial decisions, which helped to diffuse the traffic jams when it came to roadblocks that would not let the translation traffic move ahead. Care was taken in creating new avenues that whatever choices were made did not upset any essential balance of the original poem, and its meaning because I was in love with the poems I was translating, and did not wish to betray them in any way. At each stage, an interpretation of the text mattered significantly in making the choices. The meanings had to be negotiated through an evaluation of both the languages, cultures and the appropriateness of the contexts. The bi-directional interaction between the texts had to be managed from the point of view of "confluence" of the texts and the ideas therein rather than their outstanding differences. My translations are "a response to the irrepressible urge to express life" a poet and a sensibility, the "way one paints or bursts into song, splashing colour on the canvas, or modulating melodies for the sheer pleasure of it."

I appreciate the way Malena has worded her experience of translating a work of art, and would like to add a quotation from her regarding the translator's desire for confluence. I share her experience of merging with the text that I found suitable for translation and wished to "achieve confluence and display my (feminist or feminine?) solidarity" with Emily Dickinson's poems by rendering them in as best a Marathi as possible.

The more basic managerial decisions a translator has to make are like the very decision to translate this or that, then the object itself in a certain genre and so on. I interviewed a number of translators of significance that I have known, and asked them why all of them felt like translating something. Except for one who was introduced to translation because he couldn't succeed in creative writing, most others answered that they had an immediate urge to

share their experience of reading a certain work of art with the people in their own linguistic community. Some thought that they would bring in something nonexistent in their language, thereby contributing to it, and help enhance the richness of their language. Regarding the choice of a genre, some of them were basically fiction readers and enjoyed translating fiction. Others made a decision to translate whatever they came across and liked it, and thought worth translating it. My own decision to translate was two fold: I thought that Emily was an extraordinary poet, with fresh unconventional attitude to death, and other themes, and I had to bring it into my language so that I could share it with others. Apart from that, I was so fascinated by her treatment of various themes, and I had enjoyed reading her poems so much that I wanted to relive that experience and in my own language, while recreating it for others who could not go to the English original. That activity would bring it even closer to my heart. That would allow me to dwell in the experience for prolonged hours. I loved the challenge of translating those poems into Marathi, which gave me an opportunity to test the strength of my language to stand and absorb new modes of meaning.

Conclusion:

In the process of writing this paper, I reviewed many recent theories of translation, and realized how scholars and researchers are more inclined to state practice- and experience-driven theories of translation. Malena describes the experience quite aptly with regard to what happens in translating from one language to another. "This negotiation of the text,... seeks to retain the dynamics of the structure of the original but ends up in setting off a dynamics of its own, and beyond my control." In addition to subscribing to Malena's views regarding the negotiation of the texts and their meanings, my own theory relies on my awareness of the concepts in modern Linguistics, Sociolinguistics and takes into account the practical constraints the translator has to face. Within these limitations, I strongly believe in bringing out the best possible from the source language into the target language. My experience in translating Emily Dickinson's poetry, and also short stories of Nobel Prize winners, has impressed upon me that a translator

cannot do without critical faculties and creative faculties of a high order. In the absence of these, translations can be only trash!

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From Devaki to Yashoda: The Intra-authorial Mediation in Translating One's Own Plays

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When the translator (the creator of the TL text) and the author (the creator of the SL text) are rolled into a single organism, as in my case, the notion of heirarchization with regard to the creator and translator and Popovic's idea of four equivalences prescribed and searched for during translation are erased. As the nurturing mother (Yashoda) of my own SL text, I am compelled to go about with semantic consideration, circumlocution and transformations that do not alter the core meaning of my own original writing (my creative position metaphorised as Devaki). The TL rendering becomes a rewriting and veritably a new creation in the case of the author – translator.

This leads to the dissolution of the idea of the 'correct' and 'invariant' translation which two notions seem to be even otherwise either outdated or irrelevant.

One of the words for "translation" in my source language, Oriya, an Indo-Aryan language, is *rupantar*. It means 'change of form'. In Oriya, the *Mahabharata* of Sarala Das (15th century) is accepted as an original writing even though there are innumerable interpolations of indigenised episodes. This puts paid to Eugene Nida's prescriptions for a 'correct' and 'invariant' version of translation. In a folk version of *Ramayana*, Sita is treated as Rama's sister in my state and in the Jagannath temple is the only place in India in which a sister is worshipped with her two brothers. Thus, my culture allows all sorts of variation and all variations are accepted as "correct" and adhered to religiously.

I do not translate into English for an improvement in my status. Nor do I translate with a colonial mission to institutionalise English.

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In fact I feel that I am doing justice neither to the SL nor to the literary piece by translating it into a language like English. The *aksharas* (alphabets) in my language are called *varna* which also means colour. My native alphabets, like in Sanskrit, have a colour, a gender, are positioned in a *chakra* and are assigned to a *Yogini*, whereas the English language has a 'phonetics' that describes only the sounds produced by the lips and the teeth and the tongue etc. It does not undergo a process of transformation from the *ParaVak* to *Baikhari Vak* for articulation*. Yet I translate my plays into English and such an effort is perhaps rooted in my inner frustration – the frustration of not being able to share my creative experiences with the Oriya elite reading society. During the forty years of my stage career and with my hundred odd plays I never had any problem with my rural audience. My own plays directed by me for the repertory companies run for 10 to 12 years with 7 to 10 thousand spectators. But I have problems with the so called intellectuals, most of whom are either IAS officer-poets or their sycophant teacher critics who would continuously lobby their way into a project of denouncing the dramatic text as mediocre writing. My intention behind translating play-texts is partly aimed at counteracting such an intellectual prejudice.

Thus, my endeavour in this paper would be to study the process of translation that takes place within this individual author-translator, a playwright and director in Oriya and a translator into English. These are three distinctly different positions within the inner space. The focus of my paper would be to attempt a hermeneutical approach to translation and my arguments would be advanced purely from my personal experiences. I have been working on the stage for the last four decades as a playwright, for more than two decades as a director, and I have been engaged in practical translation for two decades.

I begin to envision four definite stages of attitudinal transformation in the process of my translation: (a) Trust (b)

*This is the author's opinion, which is clearly untenable. No human language can claim intrinsic superiority on such grounds— Editors

Comprehension (c) Incorporation and (d) Reciprocity. All these changes within this authorial self are viewed here as mediations between my fragmented selves initiated by a fragment named 'Translator'. This fragmented author of the TL is codified here as A² and the writer of the Odia text (SL) is taken as A¹. As the director within me is the first functional reader and the interpreter of the text, who has created it for the second time in performing space, he is taken as A^{2(a)}.

(a) Trust:

The process begins A² (of the TL) decides to translate, which, according to George Steiner's dictionary, is "to carry over from what has been silent to what is vocal, from the distant to the near. But also to carry back" (Steiner). But A² selects one book in preference to others for this act of "carrying over" and "carrying back". This begins with the assumption that the particular play-text has 'something' which is translatable and the other SL texts are eliminated either because their linguistic, paradigmatic, stylistic or textual equivalences are not available, or because of their inherent cultural untransmissibility.

The criterion of the search initiated by A² seems too mechanical for A¹ who likes all his works to be translated for the extension of his creative self. He does not care for the possible loss in translation as it has been pointed out by Eugene Nida in *Towards the Science of Translating*. Rather the greedy A¹ would quote from Anton Popovic's *Dictionary* wherein he mentions five kinds of shifts in translation (constitutive, generic, individual, negative and topical shifts) deploying which TL variants could be produced.

As this intra-authorial tension takes place in the process of selection through investment of trust and with multiple readings of the SL, another unacknowledged translator appears to give one more shake to the process of sifting in the linguistic sieve. He is the Director of the SL Text represented here as A^{2(a)}. As a semiotic translator, he wouldn't search for synonyms and equivalences, but for signs that embed within them a duality in which the 'ungrammatical' would be accepted as mimesis and 'grammatical' within the significance-network of the translation.

A^{2 (a)} would, however, search for the linguistic equivalence, but language in his text of translation should have functionality in addition to readability. In India we have *dhwani* that expresses a threefold sense: *abidha* (denotative), *lakshana* (indicative) and *vyanjana* (suggestive). The translator, while catering to the demands of A^{2 (a)} accepts this semantic value. A² would, now, after investing one more seesaw screening, would search for four structural features in the text: (a) the acting style deployed in the text (b) the expected role of the audience (c) whether the play falls into the category of realism, fantasy or expressionism, absurd, mixed means theatre or of a hyper-realistic mode mingled with abstract expressionism or some such esoteric brand that the showbiz invents for itself for survival in an era of mega soap operas and (d) the performance space of the play.

A particular acting style would emerge out of a particular syntax and disorders would result in chaotic performance and incommunicative acting style.

(b) Comprehension:

A² of my creative space now takes the lead to break the codes by making a critical incursion into the inspired fable of the SL text. The decipherment at this level is dissection and it leaves the shell of the SL Text smashed and the vital layers stripped. But for A² (the initiator of comprehension), the act is a symbolic rendering of the spiritual dynamics of translation. However, it goes against the naïve inspiration of A¹ during the act of comprehension leading to interpretation / translation. It is a primal hunt for meaning.

The interference of A^{2 (a)} at the level of comprehension/interpretation is more vital. A^{2 (a)} would interpret a piece of background music, the movements of the artists from one acting zone to the other, various colours and levels of intensities of light and the stage-designer's positioning of the properties/objectives. Mr.A^{2 (a)} demands a nonverbal code to be revealed in which the act of decipherment and decodification is not only "aggressive and dissection, it is also (in Steiner's dramatisation) a bone-shatteringly arduous work".

The translation of a dramatic text becomes problematic because of its two strands of narrative lines – linguistic and semiotic. A², always used to the linguistic mode, would deploy his isolating device of *langue* and *parole* to relocate (may be to dislocate as well) the semiotic codes or the system's signs to establish the set of combinatory rules that give rise to all its internal relations. Although this turning of the focus toward the structure comes within the limits of linguistic structure, it becomes an extralinguistic reality in relation to the comprehension or interpretation of A^{2(a)}.

As a supporter of the semiotic narrative, the Director (A^{2(a)}) feels the necessity of dechronologizing and relogicizing the dramatic narrative. He may also try to do so by subordinating every syntagmatic (and therefore temporal) aspect of the narrative to a corresponding paradigmatic (and therefore achronological) aspect. The act of A^{2(a)} is just an extension of linguistics to narrative semiotics, but it also brings about a lot of strategic change of levels in narratology.

(c) Incorporation:

With all such investments of trust and multiple levels of comprehension, A² encounters the third stage of his project, in which, he would, now, deal with an attitudinal crisis called "incorporation" – "the import of meaning and of form, the embodiment" (which) "is not made in or into a vacuum. The entire semantic field is crowd". Each of the intra-authorial segments comes forward, ready with its own structures of understanding, to absorb and domestic this esoteric and creative reality, this may dislocate or relocate the whole structure of Devaki's (SL) as it is being nurtured by Yashoda's principles.

I would prefer to cite an example from the translation of my own play, "*Drawing a Full Circle*", (1985) published in *Indian Literature*, (1999 Sept - Oct. 2000). The selection of the play for translation is radical in two ways – it alters and modifies a popular myth of Orissa and secondly it showcases a Hindu God as a character on the stage. The character of the God is presented as a politically manoeuvred mask that is idolised as a religious icon and

the essence behind this religious image (the inner structure of the character) is theatricalised simultaneously through two semiotic signs – musically as a long roll of flute as if heard through the last six thousand years, and sculpturally as a configuration made up by two half circles that constitute a *Poorna*.

Thus, the translator, or A², in this case, endeavours to incorporate the entire “cultural ensemble” and a traditional symbolic set into the fabric of an alien linguistic culture. A² cannot import it without the risk of transforming the SL of his counterpart, A¹. But a critic, following Bogatyrev’s prescription for the translation of play-texts, cannot produce a version that is too “free” and “deviant”. He is run through semiotics and with an emphasis on extralinguistic criteria.

Scene 10 of the play may be cited as an example. Stones from the temple of Jagannath are falling down and the temple is on the verge of a collapse. Jagannath is unable to do anything substantial. So, Jogamaya, the temple’s American caretaker has asked the tribal girl Jui to adopt some indigenous ‘*tantric* method’ to “renovate the temple”. Jui is supposed to work out the *pooja* of a “flower-*tantra*” which is nowhere prescribed and which is purely a figment of A¹’s imagination, worked out to give a touch of ‘magical realism’ to the play. A¹ uses *tantric* folk music and Jui with her “one-two-three” (three-beat) tribal rhythm decorates the stage with flowerpots. As she decorates, she mutters:

“Flowers of ten colours. And ten shafts of grass. Three pieces of strings to be tied up thrice and a flame has to be burnt with pure ghee... some pure refined rice to be coloured with chalk powder of five colours.... Ten painted pots filled with water and a raw coconut each upon them have to be placed. And mango leaves.... A cock has to be brought and fed with the turmeric rice... then it will be sacrificed.”

(a long-drawn inarticulate sound *hullhool* is heard from a group of women from the background as they do in the Hindu marriage rituals).

A² of this translation confesses here that despite a good deal of incorporation, the exact rhythm and language and the performing style could not be transported. A¹ of the SL reports that there is no such *tantra* called flower *tantra*. The *tantric* rituals narrated never exist. This is an imitation-ritual created for an ethnic kind of effect and it could not be recreated.

The language used in the SL is an imitation of 10th-12th century ritualistic Oriya prose and that particular style of prose is recited during a ritual-vow. This typical prose singing is used even today in Berhampur area by the so-called 'untouchable' women during a ritual performance called *Oshakothi* performed during *Dussera*, the ten-day festival in October.

Sometimes, a lady Shaman would emerge from nowhere at Bhubaneswar and lots of frustrated and diseased men and women would visit her. She would solve their problems by singing such an impromptu prose song.

Jui's muttering of these ritualistic words do not have any literary meaning since she is bringing the flowers, shafts of grass, flames, rice, coloured with turmeric powder and mango leaves on to the stage. The tantric folk music is played in the background and thus Jui's muttering of the libretto in an incantatory style is just a gateway to the succeeding change of consciousness- the religious trance. Immediately after Jui's incantation there is a jerk in the *hulhooli* choral and then Jogamaya comes dancing like a Shaman playing to the *Oshakothi* *tantric* rhythm which was also the base for Jui's incantation. Jogamaya holds a broom made of peacock feathers and the so-called Lord Jagannath enacts the role of a sacrificial cock.

A² (n) within me is not, somehow, satisfied with the English rendering. The ordinary words of Jui could automatically become nonordinary because of the 10th – 12th century lexical and syntactic forms in the SL and its English rendering could not be made as archaic as in the SL carrying over the original semantic content. Jui's accent and intonation pattern could not be incorporated in the TL.

There has also been an exact failure with regard to its semiotic transportation of the scene does not exactly drive religious belief, the trance could successfully be induced by the *tantric* folk rhythm of *Oshakothi* and the scenic transformation achieved through the arrangement of the flower pots and the rhythmic movements of Jui, Yogamaya and Jagannath along with Jui's archaic incantations. I do.. not know personally what would happen if Indian experts of the post-colonial era think of an Indo-Anglian production of this play. The same thing happened to Sam Shepard's plays when he introduced the Hopi dance and rituals in his play, *Operation Sidewinder*. The musical notations were printed on the text, but it further obfuscated the play's musical import.

(d) Reciprocity

The fourth and the final stage of experience that comes to the translator is the enactment of reciprocity. Whether the translator does his act successfully or not, he takes a great deal from the SL and as Steiner points out, "we come home laden" and this causes "disequilibria through out the system by taking away from 'the other' and by adding... to our own.... The hermeneutic act must compensate... it must mediate into exchange... it enlarges the stature of the original".

So, at the final stage, the mediation of A² ends up as a creative exchange or as a negotiation for a creative exchange between the SL and the TL. It is a hermeneutic decision towards compensating for what has been taken away in the process of translation.

As the T² proceeds now to exchange in reciprocity, he feels obliged to alter the contours and the structures of the TL as it was done in this author's translation of Jui's archaic incantation in *Drawing a Full Circle*. If it is not a successful transportation, the translator, at least, brings a bearable perspective when he encounters the impasse of "untranslatability" in the cultural-linguistic matrix. In this process of reciprocity (exchangeability) between the SL and the TL, these alterations and substitutions can be called the process of "alternity".

Alternity positions the art, craft and science of translation studies in the realm of hermeneutics. Hermeneutics branches off

into two directions: (a) the theory and practice of understanding and (b) value judgement / aesthetics. If there is anything called a theory of understanding, it is nothing as a presence through interpretation. Although the tribal-archaic rhythm and intonation are absent in the English rendering of Jui's mutterings during the flower-*tantra*, the shadow of the effect remains.

But "alternity" cannot be given to A² as a license for infinite exchangeability so that he would lapse into an uncharted jungle of creations where the enormity of being delinks from the subatomic unit of structure. This demands multiple readings as a pre-requisite for reciprocity in translation. The multiple layers of writings that constitute a text and generate contestations, parody and dialoguing amongst them get united at a site called the 'reader', enacted here by A².

Interestingly enough, the author of the SL text (A¹) has already vacated his position and disappeared within this writer's inner space, and the new author (A^{2(a)} / translator) has not yet appeared on the scene when this reader begins to understand the SL as a prerequisite. One fragment of my split-self known as A¹ backs off and leaves the space for the other fragment, A² who mediates now as a reader or a pre-translator (Let us symbolise this authorial fragment as A⁻²). A⁻², as a reader, assumes at least five different roles as he mediates with A¹: as a mock reader (A^{-2(a)}), as a model reader (A^{-2(b)}), as an implied reader (A^{-2(c)}), as a super reader (A^{-2(d)}) or as the real reader (A^{-2(e)}). The understanding of the SL with its multiple layers of converting himself into a Translator, this authorial fragment within this author joins the interpretative community. This requires a literary competence in A⁻² who would soon emerge as A². The "multiple writings" playing through and pulverizing the once closed, organic, stable, objective, autonomous text can hardly remain absent from A⁻². However, A¹ and A² would not allow A⁻² to imprint his private fantasies, desires and neurosis in a radically in a personal way upon the SL.

As I intend to define actual position of A⁻², I discover a mixed bag of critical writings, sharing an orientation towards the role of the reader who is given an important chair in pedagogical enterprises to decide on the locus and nature of literary meaning.

Stanley Fish would define Reading as Meaning and vice-versa, but 'meaning' is not a content, but an event. He would then go into the details to analyse the dynamics of the event.

This reader's (A^2 's) position is toppled when he assumes the role of the translator. Mr. $A^{2(a)}$, the director, would emerge from my authorial space and warn A^2 that he is only a reader, not a spectator. This is to remind the A^2 that play-texts do have two "addresses" and the performances are addressed to spectators through the performers. In other words, the director claims himself to be the first translator of the play-text. The performing group undertakes the second phase of translation and the reception of the play involves a "relay"-like process: first received by the performers and then by the spectators, who are also translators.

The spectators are substitute readers, but "reading" in their case is an aesthetic experience and a pure event. The interpretative procedures applied for other translators of other genres would be wholly different from the translator of play-texts. There is one convenience for A^2 that the plurality of the theatrical metalanguages (in the SL) can pass on more safety to the TL than the translation of the literature. However, the translator would never be in a position to know whether the play emotes the spectator through Aristotelian "catharsis" or de-emotes them through Brechtian "alienation".

With all these intra-authorial mediations the T^2 in me travels through two stages: the first stage on which I go from source to "literal" translation and, then, a second stage of post writing, in which the product is given a finishing touch. During the second stage of postwriting, the translator is distantiated from the too-literal, too-influential, original and the revision is expected to produce a more "natural" version. The first phase translation is done without any literary ambitions, but with an expertise in the foreign language and a striving to be "literal". The T^2 relates his source to one more remove from himself and it is a shift of stance: from a "source-oriented" to a "reader-oriented" practice of translation. I do not know what the translators of poems do, but in translating drama, the second phase is required for performative characterisation. It is a kind of cosmetic surgery and during this phase, editing is done with little or no consultation with either the

source (A^1) or the translator (A^2) who in this intra-authorial scheme are ignored.

Seekers of fidelity in translation would, perhaps, notice a flouting of the norms here, but since the act of translation requires an axiomatic leap toward meaning—"fullness", there can be no striving toward intelligibility or value-judgement, however provisional it might be, without such a revision. This is an enactment of 'reciprocity', or a mediation into "exchange". However, with these revisions, the T^2 within me proceeds : in to recross the divide of language and community only to bring out a simulacrum of the original. But this act of interpretation represent movements across borders; and perhaps, includes some transaction between the secular (with the freedom to deviate) and the transcendent (which might also result in the production of the simulacrum). The T^2 within me does not take it as a flirtation with the mystical or the irrational. Thus, this author-translator is habituated not only to a startling combination of learning and humility, but also to a sense of high purpose. Perhaps, this is a paradox embedded in the experience of a translator.

As a concluding remark I would like to confess that the sound of a flute or the visual of a sculpture transports the value of my play more successfully than words.

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Translating Literary Texts Through Indian Poetics: A Phenomenological Study

T.R.S.Sharma*

The simulacrum is never what hides

The truth-it is truth that hides

The fact that there is none.

The simulacrum is true.

--Ecclesiastes

(as cited by Jean Baudrillard)

The translator is a writer whose singular originality lies in the fact that he seems to make no claim to any.

--Maurice Blanchot

(as cited by Lawrence Venuti)

With the beginning of the post-colonial period in India, and especially in the last fifteen years or so, the act of translation can be said to have come of age, and its activity expanded a great deal. Penguin India, Macmillans of Madras, for instance, are coming out with translations in English of classics in all the regional languages of India.

If you believe in the strong/weak dichotomy of languages, English being a 'strong' language, then for once, it seemed, power flowed in the reverse direction: or, conversely, the strong language appropriated to itself whatever best is available in the 'weak' languages so that it can grow stronger! English being a strong language in this sense also represents a strong culture that is globally influential and appropriative. To put it differently, that is, to view the phenomenon in global terms, even as the Indian nation state opened up for capital flows from the west, and is now on its fast track globalising itself in the process, it is also engaged, it can be said, in an internal process, an implosion of meaning where by

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linguistic boundaries are being crossed through a massive programme of translation practice, for there will soon be a great pool of literary material available from all the national languages of India. However at this point in time, due to historical reasons, English representing a minority culture in India occupies the rallying point and a point of convergence for all the literary output from different languages through the instrumentality of translation.

Remember, for instance, Richard Schechner's theories in the context of performative arts. They plead for the *avant-garde* "cosmopolitan style" and the "multi-cultural thinking" for the western theatre so that it can "produce works across various borders political, geographical, personal, generic and conceptual". In this process, it can appropriate into the theatrical practices all the indigenous styles and techniques, both folk and classical, from the Indian, Balinese and Thai theatres. The effects of power implicit in such a syncretic global knowledge were all there for us to see in Peter Brook's version of the *Mahabharata*. It was an effort to globalise a culture-specific text, to remove it from its cultural moorings and take it onto a neutral ground wherein a more sanitized, universal version of the epic could be projected. It was translation with a vengeance!

Readers usually ask how faithful is a piece of translation to its original, or how authentic it is. Their anxiety to be faithful is often very touching. The original text is like a wife who happens to be very demanding, and the translator tries hard to be faithful to her/it. But there are always hurdles, distractions on the way, I mean verbal distractions. While the translator is apt to philander quite a bit with words, it would be dangerous when it comes to translating a philosophical treatise. By and large, it may be admitted, that translating expository prose is fairly easy. However, where the translator needs to be extra cautious is with philosophical concepts. For as George Steiner emphasizes, "polysemy, the capacity of the same word to mean different things, such difference ranging from nuance to antithesis, characterises the language of ideology". Therefore the translator requires an inter-textual knowledge, and an awareness of the historical evolution of the concept in its philosophical tradition, and its culture.

Let me cite an example: The concept of *Maya* has often been translated as 'illusion'. The mischief, perhaps unintended, was first committed in the 19th century by W.D. Whitney, when he translated into English from a German translation of the *Vedic Sanskrit, Atharva Veda Samhita*. There are more than hundred occurrences of the term *Maya* in the *Vedas* as scholars tell us, and it first refers to *Mitra* and *Varuna*, and their powers of creating objects characterized by forms and dimensions. '*Ma*', the root word, means etymologically to measure, also to know. It is the phenomenal world with measurable, visible forms. And when the concept traverses down to Shankara, it does acquire a certain illusory aspect, but only in the context of *Brahman*. '*Ya*', the suffix in *Maya*, according to Yaska's *Nirukta*, means 'by which the objects are given specific shape'.

When it comes to literary texts, the story gets more complicated. Here the translator is not only an ideal reader, but also an intimate reader, and he surrenders his self to the text. He realizes that the translation is not a matter of looking for synonyms, arranging syntax and throwing a bit of local colour. Reading is the most intimate act, and one begins to understand why Roland Barthes emphasizes that the act of reading is like a "juissance", an erotic experience. You need to savour the sound and semantic values of words and to be in love with them. Surrendering to the text in this way means most of the time being literal-for the 'spirit killeth and the letter giveth life'. That is how you retextualise the original in the receiving language. To maximize the problematic of translation, for purposes of analysis, you need that the language you translate from and the one you translate into are alien, and not cognate languages.

The translator usually faces problems in four overlapping areas. They are, to use the Indian aesthetic categories, that is categories that characterise the four major schools of criticism in Sanskrit, which flourished in India during the first millennium AD: *Rasa*, *Riti*, *alamkara* and *dhvani*. Let me briefly explain, while delimiting the range of these concepts, what they mean in close relevance to the act of translation. *Rasa* is a complex and a composite term. Its meaning ranges from the mystical to the gastronomical. For my purpose, since one strand of *Rasa* concept is relevant here, it can be

described as the shaping principle, or what Nietzsche would call "the form creating force", in a literary text. It is the 'inscape', to use the term from Hopkins, which gives the text its distinction of being. To get at this *Rasa*, this inner rhetoricity, working through the text and shaping it, is therefore the first requisite of a translator. When once he gets it right, he is on the right track. *Rasa* would give him the overall orientation of the text.

Then comes *Riti*, the stylistics working within the text—the phonetic and the syntactic limits within which the text enacts, performs. Here the western notion of the rhetoric may not help. For rhetoric in the western tradition is an all-inclusive term. It subsumes both the stylistic and the tropological in a text, while in Sanskrit criticism, the stylistics of a piece of literature is distinguished from the tropes, or the figures of thought. In a phrase like 'rhetorical tropes', often used in western criticism, both aspects of a text have been telescoped into one unit with a composite sense. In this case it would be hard to know what function the tropes render in the overall rhetorical structure of the text. Furthermore, we would not know if the tropes are reactive, as they sometimes are, and if reactive, how radically so, so as to upset/subvert the rhetorics of the text.

While attending to the *Riti* of the text, it is possible to simulate the prose rhythms of the original text in the receiving language. How do you, for instance, translate Hemingway? He goes in for the Anglo-Saxon word, often for the monosyllables. So at the lexical level, while translating him into Hindi or Kannada, you need to look for the *desi* not *marga* words. In contrast, when you want to translate, say, Faulkner with his heavy constructions of the periodic sentence, you have to go in for the *marga* words.

But this is not the complete story. *Riti* literally means 'the ways of saying'-what Robert Frost called 'the sound of sense' or 'voice tones'. The translator must have a keen ear for this 'sound of sense', the attitude the writer has formed toward the experience he is narrating. He needs to notice how this sound of sense is exerting its pressure on the syntax, subtly altering its structure, even transforming it at times. The translator here is like an actor interpreting a script. If many translations fail, the reason is obvious:

they simply flatten out the several sounds of sense, which usually qualify, modify human experience embodied in the text. This is particularly true and all the more relevant if one is translating poetry. For if there is in the text a delicate consonance or assonantal music, one can work out in the receiving language 'a structural mimicry', to use A K Ramanujan's phrase. The translator can mimic, feign, simulate verbal effects in his translation. Isn't he, after all, an actor in words? Furthermore, you have here the entire material for constituting a speech-act theory-a theory to discriminate between 'sentence-sounds', statements, conditionals, postulates, assents, and denials.

Now to move on to the third aesthetic dimension: in a fictional text, the context is often internalised, and can be glimpsed in the use of *alamkaras*. If it is a poetic novel, say, *Samskara*, a novel by U R Ananthamurthy, then a translator like A K Ramanujan succeeds pre-eminently because his poetic sensibilities respond to the *alamkaras*, the figure of thought in the novel. Some of the most moving experiences come through with a cluster of images, and become memorable in translation. But then if the translator is dealing with a complex poetic text, he may have to look out for the inherent opposition, which often results in disruption, between the *alamkaras* and *Riti* of the text that is between the rhetorical vector and the logic of ideology. They often work at cross purposes letting the text deconstruct itself. One can discern in *Samskara*, for instance, the ideology propelling the protagonist of the novel against his inherent *samskara* or predisposition, placing him in an aporetic situation. The irresolution of such a dilemma adds to the complexity of the novel, and the translator needs to be conscious of such a deconstructive eventuality taking place.

Dhvani, the fourth overlapping area, which is a metalinguistic reality, a force-field of meanings, often culture-specific, is probably the most elusive aspect of a text for the translator. A context not fully internalised in the text, but that surrounds the text and is often suggested by a key word or an image, this semiotics of culture that envelops the text, is often lost in translation. For instance, how do you convey the *dhvani* in 'Saraswati': she is not simply a goddess, but someone who would give an exalted feeling to millions of readers in India! Sangam poetry in Tamil (3rd century BC to AD

100), for instance, is a real challenge for any translator. These poems portray landscape and human emotions as being closely interwoven so that mountain, forest, river, sand and coastline take on poetic meanings, yielding myriad overtones-how will a translator ever deal with them? There is a whole parallel web of meanings being woven, a web which mirrors the "topologies of a culture", to use a phrase from George Steiner. Can a translation recreate this web by recontextualising it in the receptor language? Further it is the region of puns and polysemy, of personal allusions, esoteric symbolism, and indigenous myth, which often commute beyond words. The form of life that surrounds the text or those echoes and references to other and earlier texts of the same culture, one concedes, can hardly be revived in translation. Robert Frost once said that poetry is what is lost in translation. He was perhaps far wide off the mark: for poetry can be translated. What is lost, though in translation is the resonance, the essential intertextuality. *Dhvani* can operate wide rangingly even in a deceptively simple poem such as, say, "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening."

To show that it is irretrievable in a translation, take the last stanza of the poem. The stanza presents the farmer in the poem, who is returning home, as resisting the fascination he feels for the snowy evening, for nature lures him with a death wish. Behind this momentary fascination, there is the whole puritan history which highlights the sinfulness of man, and of nature which the puritans viewed with a sense of fascinated horror. The *dhvani* or resonance of this puritan history, which characterises nature as harbouring dark and sinister forces, exercising their fascination on the human mind, this entire emotive history is captured by the collocation of three simple epithets: "lovely, dark and deep". This intertextual knowledge, though often modulated and muted in Frost, is based on one's reading of earlier writers such as Jonathan Edwards, Edward Taylor and Emily Dickinson, a knowledge which helps one to grasp the connotational range of a poem, but which reminds the translator that he can hardly render it in the receiving language. Closer home, the *Mahabharata* is said to have close links with the *Vedic* sources while the *Ramayana* is much nearer to *kavya* literature. In translation the proximity of these epics to their sources or their affiliations to subsequent texts cannot be suggested in translation

specially when the receiving language happens to be alien, and not cognate.

Now a word is to be said about the necessary orientation of the translator, for he is virtually dealing with two cultures. When it comes to his readers, it is not enough if he brings an alien text to their proximity, it is essential that he carries/transposes his readers into the alien culture through his rendition. Furthermore, there are one or two open questions regarding the role of the translator: Should a translation bear the imprint of the translator, and the traces of the source language? How do you translate ancient classics? Can modern idiom do justice to ancient classics and the cultures they represent? The classics, as we know, get translated time and again in the idiom of every age with the new demands of readers. The translator in this context feels the compulsion to decide on the right registers and idiom that his contemporary readers would expect to find in his translation.

Having said all this, one should concede that there is an inherent symmetry at the core of translation. For we cannot get the original by translating back from the received language. The translator, effecting, though, an intercultural mediation, is essentially a linguistic amphibian working with two different media. He stands midway between dualities, culturally, linguistically.

The relation between the original and the facsimile is the ineliminable relation that the translator, therefore, needs to posit between the signified and the signifier. The signifiers of a literary text, as it is well known, are often subject to centrifugal forces of meaning. To constrain and arrest therefore the play of key signifiers from the inescapable dissemination, all the four categories described above offer a conceptually integrated frame, which, when grasped by the alert translator, can be seen as functioning synchronically in the text so as to ensure that the identity of the original is preserved in the rendition. Furthermore, what is involved in the rendering is the constant manoeuvring between distanciation which the original text thematises through its cultural moorings and the proximity the translator enjoys with the receptor language. In the final analysis every translation (especially when an alien

language is involved) becomes a homology, seeking some kind of identity in essential difference. Otherwise both the source and receiving languages have different histories, cultures, and varying rhythms of growth.

Now let us acknowledge that there is a crucial if somewhat intriguing aspect to the act of translation: It is a collaboration between the original author and the secondary translator, a collaboration which, ironically enough, results in the erasure of the original and its reinscription in the receiving language. Think of Tolstoy and Dostoevski: Their mighty Russian souls come through with their agonies and ecstasies in Constance Garnet's English translation! So do Sophocles and Aristophanes, in Gilbert Murray's translation, erasing for us the source language. It is not the source therefore but the simulacrum which precedes, as Jean Baudrillard insists. Consequently, the simulacrum is the real, for the Real really does not exist anymore-not, anyway, in the cyberspace of our universe! If you still insist that all translations are failures, they are, surely, fascinating failures!

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The Translator's Style

Aditi Ghosh*

Style in literature'- the 'style' of literary texts -has been the focus of many a discourse, quite understandably. The style reflected in a particular piece of writing (whatever the form of writing may be) tells us about the author, and is, in many cases, identified as his/her style. Why then is the style of a translated text not considered as the translator's style? The reasons are several:

- (1) The translator's job is to present the style of the original author, and not to create a style of his own.
- (2) The translation should read like an original, and thereby the translator's identity is supposed to be shrouded in the dark.
- (3) Nida's contribution to Translation Studies is by no means regarded insignificant. In his opinion, the translated text should produce the same effect on the receptor audience as the original text has on the source language audience. This being the case, Nida suggests that changes be made in order to produce this effect.
- (4) In more cases than not, the translated work is not evaluated-compared with the original-to understand to what extent it resembles the original work.

What the translator does, or should do, is to get transformed into the author of the original and with all his/her mind, will and soul, and also ponder the problem of how to transform the shape, gait, style and all other features, and how to express them. The purpose is to make something written in one language well represented in another.

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The translator's job thus is accompanied by an enormous responsibility, and also runs a lot of risk. In the process, he/she falls, as Newmark points out, 'a victim of a constant tension between the acts of overtranslation and undertranslation'.

There is also the eternally pervasive question of 'fidelity' of the translator.

As a practicing translator, I have experienced /arrived at a few points:

- (1) The stylistic outfit of the original text is a result/final product of the interweaving of all the kinds of elements used in it—words, phrases and so on. That is to say, the style of the original text consists in the pattern in which the words, sentences, phrases, etc., are arranged.
- (2) The use of literary devices such as metaphors, similes, idioms and so on, contribute to this 'style'.
- (3) In Mohanty's *Harijana*, the author 'style' is distinct. The various aspects of this style and its reasons will be delineated further down in this paper.

Certainly, style denotes, connotes, and leads to innumerable other ideas, points and so on, that fastidious students and stalwarts of literary stylistic analysis and discourse have already outlined in their volumes. My intention in the above said three points is not to sum up such expert notions of style; I have merely tried to express in the simplest terms what the style of the original text means to me, insofar as any discourse in translation is concerned.

This being the case does the efficient translator not try to convert the original text into another text in a different language, which should read exactly like an original text in that language, though it is not the same? The translator's task is, then, to take the content of a certain mould, and place it in another, so prudently and perhaps 'diplomatically', that it is not distorted even to the slightest extent, and at the same time, undergoes a few changes to get accommodated in its new mould, thereby producing the impression of being an original text on the mind of the intended audience. This 'prudent carrying over' of content, we at times fail to realize,

involves a good deal of creative energy. One may ask here-how? I shall explicate this question further in this paper.

I shall first present a number of illustrations to explain how I have been obliged to make changes in Mohanty's 'style' while translating *Harijana* into English.

1. This novel focuses parallelly on the life of scavengers and that of people of the so-called 'high-society'. The characters in the scavengers' slum, however, form the main body of it. It concentrates on the miserable life led by scavengers, and zeroes in on the poor vis-à-vis the rich. The poor and downtrodden, represented by the scavengers, are far less opportune when compared with the rich, capitalist class signified by the two well-to-do families in the town, who dwell in a chic atmosphere. The language used by the uneducated scavengers, thus, differs from the standard version of the Oriya language, generally used by the above said richer class. The language used by the former consists of more slang, phrases and idioms than that of the latter. One example of this is the following:

The scavengers here use a lot of idiomatic expressions in their speech. While translating these, I had three options-to omit these altogether, to translate them into plain sentences and to find a corresponding idiom in English. The first option I ruled out in almost all cases because that may lead to taking away from the content. There have been some cases where a gap seemed to exist; the idiomatic phrase/sentence did not have an exactly corresponding one-an equivalent-in English. In such cases, how could that unit of expression containing that particular idiom, be transferred into the receptor language, its content remaining undisturbed? The solution I adapted was this: the content of that phrase/sentence was picked and was embedded into another sentence-in the receptor language-the form of which was as close as possible to the original.

Oriya example: to	<i>munDa ganDi</i>	<i>paRigalA</i>
Gloss:	Your head body	fell
Translation:	Oh! Nothing, you fool!	

The phrase *munDa ganDi* is a peculiar idiomatic expression in Oriya. It is used in cases where one intends to dismiss someone's ideas or words, or does not want to take it into consideration, and intends to laugh it away, in ridicule. However, in the context in which it appears in the novel, it only serves to add to the intensity of the meaning. Apart from this it plays no other role in the expression of the meaning. Therefore in order to retain the functionality of the phrase, it has been translated keeping in mind the way in which it contributes to the effect of the sentence(s)/context it is connected with or is part of. It has thus been translated as "Oh! Nothing, you fool!"

Oriya example: *ilo mo dau~*

Gloss: oh my ----

Translation: Oh gosh!

In this case, the phrase shows a strong colloquial tinge. And understandable, the Oriya and English colloquy are far distanced from each other, both in terms of content, and in terms of rules and technique. Not only in English, but even any other non-Oriya speakers cannot be expected to understand the exact meaning of *ilo mo dau~!*, unless its content is taken, reconstructed in the form of an English sentence which produces the same effect in the given context, as *ilo mo dau~!* did, that is, serves the function of this sentence.

The creativity of the translator thus, finds utmost expression in such a case, as he/she had to 'create' a new mould-a new cast-for the content of the original.

In a case where the idiom did have an exact or at least a close equivalent, in the task was easier. The translator-creator had to, anyway, interpret an expression and recreate it in another existing form. The following is a relevant example.

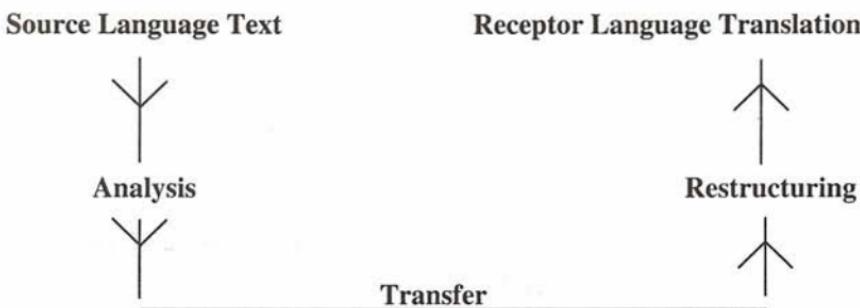
Oriya ex: *mana bujhe nAhi~ rANi o candrakANira bhedAbheda*

Gloss: heart understands not queen and one-eyed's difference

Trans: The heart does not understand the difference between Heaven and hell.

What *rANi o candrakANira bhedAbheda* means to an Oriya speaker, 'the difference between Heaven and hell' means to the English speaker. Therefore the phrase has been used as the equivalent for *rANi o candrakANira bhedAbheda*.

Nida's model of translation, which is as follows,



is, I believe, a statement of the translator's creative potential.

2. Another kind of problem was posed by the author's unique/peculiar/singular technique of changing the tense of the sentences. He maintains no consistency with regard to tenses, switching frequently between past perfect, past continuous and present perfect, etc., even while talking about the same event, or about more than one corresponding events.

One of the paragraphs in Chapter 7 of the book begins with the following sentence.

Oriya ex: *e tAku nuA*
 Gloss: this to her new
 Trans: It was new to her.

The tense used in this sentence is present perfect.

The following sentence is given below.

Oriya ex: *tAra buddhi hajijAe*
 Gloss: her thinking is lost
 Trans: Her thinking would be diminished.

This sentence is set in the present continuous tense.

But the translator has converted all the sentences into the past continuous tense, for maintaining consistency in the translated text. The purpose is to avoid confusion that may otherwise have faced the target language audience.

In such cases, the translator's creative instinct predicted that if such inconsistency were maintained even in the translated version, the intended audience might either find it incomprehensible or confusing, or it might seem to them a thoroughly artificial piece of writing-a consequence that goes against the very purpose of the act translating.

The translator had no option, thus, but to standardize the tense factor. The novel starts with the past continuous tense, and that was adopted as the tense of the narration in the translated version. However, wherever the tense needed to be changed as per the requirement of the text, it has been materialized.

The style of the author has thus been somewhat altered-'recreated'-to some extent, the interest of the receptor audience, so that to that group of men, the translated version reads like an original text in the language they speak.

3. The next issue worth dwelling upon consists of the problems posed by incomplete sentences. The abundant use of incomplete/broken sentences seems to be a favourite technique with Mohanty in his *Harijana*. There are two kinds of instances, in such cases, that the translator came across.
 - a. There were a number of broken /incomplete sentences which could be safely translated into English without actually opposing the grammatical set-up if the English language. A translated text should, after all, also assume a legitimate

grammatical form in the receptor language. [Perhaps one could concede this as a case of 'poetic license'.]

Many of these incomplete sentences, when rendered into English as they were, read terribly incorrect in terms of grammar. Following is an instance of the same. In the original sentence, there was no verb. To render the translated sentence (in English) complete, the appropriate verb was added to the sentence.

Oriya ex: *Agare lucA mada dokAnara hAu hAu*

Gloss: ahead hidden liquor shop's noise noise

Translation: Ahead lies the noisy crowd of the illegal/non-licensed liquor shop.

Let me illustrate one more of this kind.

Oriya example: *pache pache gARibAlAra haT haT*

Gloss: following following driver's shoo shoo

Translation: Following him is the driver's "shoo, shoo".

In the above example, the verb 'is' has been added to make the sentence complete.

- b. There is another problem, particularly at the syntactic level that faced the translator. We shall see what they were and how they were solved.

The syntactic structure of the Oriya language follows the Subject-Object-Verb order. But in certain cases, the order has been changed to Subject-Verb-Object, or even Object-Verb-Subject, and so on, for stylistic variation wherever required, in the original. In the translated text, the syntactic order of the original has been maintained as far as possible. But there have been cases where maintaining the same order has posed a threat to the comprehensibility of the translated sentence. In such cases, the word order of the original sentences has been changed so as to fit the syntactic order of the receptor language. Here is an example.

Oriya example: *dehare jor thiba bahut*

Gloss: in the body strength must be a lot

Translation: There must be a lot of strength in his body. /He must be very strong.

- c. Proverbs used in the original novel have also called for considerable decision-making ability. I shall illustrate how they have been re-presented in the translated text.

Oriya example: *sAta cakuLi cauda ce-*
 Gloss: seven rice-flour cakes fourteen sound
 Translation: Umm...nice food is being cooked!

In the above case, the proverb, as in many others, has a story associated with it, which is not, obviously, known to the non-Oriya speakers. Since it does not have an exact or even a close equivalent in the target language, it was translated only in terms of its content.

This is only illustrative, one could multiply examples.

In such cases, thus, the translator has had to intervene, exercise what we might call the translatorial discretion, and make the necessary changes. The style of the original text thus did not remain intact. The translator had to alter it, for obvious reasons. What finally emerged on the translated pages reflects the style of the translator—the style of the original recreated/reformatted with the intervention of the translator. It may be expressed as the following:

The style of the original + the translator's creative potential = The translator's style.

I have thus arrived at the conclusion that the 'style' of the translator reflected in the translated work, is the translator's style, not that of the author of the original. That style may be summarily defined as the following:

The style of the original author (as reflected in the SL text) + the intervention of the translated work, is the translator with skills, instinct and discretion = the translator's style (the style of the translated text).

The style of the translator's style is more like a looking glass. It consists in the translator's placing a transparent layer/sheet over the original text through which the target reader peeps and finds an original text, belonging, content-wise, to a different language and culture, but formally entirely to his own language.

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Writer-Translator Discourse: Translating Australian Aboriginal Women's Writing

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Australian Aboriginal Literature protests against the two centuries of colonial rule, loss of indigenous rights, culture, languages and identity. It tries to reconstruct the identity and history of the aborigines from an aboriginal perspective and deconstruct the same that have been created by the whites. The stolen generation, which was one of the atrocious consequences of colonialism, is the crucial theme of Aboriginal Literature given the fact that most aboriginal writing is autobiographical and most aboriginal writers were stolen children. They were stolen from their people and culture in the name of education and etiquette and trained to become good domestic servants in white households. Another major issue of Aboriginal Movement as well as Aboriginal Literature is the issue of half-castes, who were born out of the relationship between white men and aboriginal women, sometimes vice-versa, but considered illegitimate for most of them were born outside wedlock. They were neither accepted by the whites nor admitted by the blacks and were removed by the government saying that since they had white blood, aboriginal mothers were not eligible to look after them and that they could be trained to become civilized beings. Thus, Aboriginal Literature, like our own *Dalit* Literature and like any literature of the marginalized, comes out vehemently with resistance and a plea for restructuring the system. Hence, every word is crucial and every expression is loaded and deeply rooted in aboriginal consciousness and experience.

In this background, translation of an Aboriginal text is crucial as well as difficult. It is crucial because not just a text but a situation is being translated. It is difficult because every word is loaded and the text has multiple layers of interpretations that come directly from the depths of the writers' pathetic and horrendous experiences. The problems that the translator of Aboriginal

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Literature faces are not new or different from the problems that the translator of any other text faces. But, discuss and debate any number of times, issues and problems of translation spring up fresh. Every time the translator faces the task of translation or the problems of translation s/he does it as if it is the first time that s/he is doing it. Culture specificity, use of dialect, multiple interpretations, language intricacies and silences in the text are some of the problems that the translator of this literature faces. Problems may not be the right word here for these are the issues that bring revelation to the translator and provide clues to the interpretation of the text.

I would like to discuss some of the issues that I faced while translating two texts written by aboriginal women, *Wandering Girl* by Glenyse Ward, an autobiography and *Karobran* by Monica Clare, an autobiographical novel, in connection with translation as a writer-translator negotiation and translation as research. Original text is a negotiation between the writer and the readers whereas translation is a negotiation between the writer and the translator. What, how, how much, when and why the writer wants to say or not to say decides the text. This is where the writer negotiates with the readers. How much, how and why the translator understands or tries to understand and conveys to the readers decides the translation. This is exactly where the translator negotiates with the writer. Thus, the translator's location and context decide the translated text.

If a text is deeply rooted and is a product of political, cultural, social and economic conditions, knowledge of such history becomes important before approaching the text. For the translator, this knowledge becomes not just a means to access the text but also a responsibility to convey the writer and the text to the extent possible to the readers of the translation. Thus, problems of translation, translation as writer-translator negotiation and translation as research activity become interconnected and interdependent.

To start with, it was a challenge to translate the titles *Wandering Girl* and *Karobran*. Because, wandering girl can be a girl from the

wandering mission as well as a girl who is wandering. The protagonist is both: Glenyse is a stolen child and is brought up in a German mission called Wandering mission. We see her journey from one place to another in this autobiography. She is taken to the mission as a child and as a girl she is taken away as a domestic servant in a white household. From there she escapes and ultimately reaches her destination of leading an independent life. It is difficult to decide in which meaning the writer used the title. It is also difficult to choose a title which can convey both the meanings. At the same time, it is injustice to the writer and to the text to leave out that title. This difficulty of translating the pun on the word "wandering" is a challenge that the book throws at the translator at the very first instance. Regarding the second text, 'Karobran' is a northern New South Wales aboriginal word, which means living together or togetherness. But it is not co-existence for co-existence on equality basis is not possible between the oppressed and the oppressor. Is it a desire to live together with her family, with her people and with whites? Is it ironically used to depict the situation of not living together? The protagonist loses her mother as a child and is separated from her brother and father. The main theme of the text is Isabelle's search for her father and her brother. It never materializes because she comes to know that her father has passed away and her brother has moved away to a far off place. How to convey all this in the title is the biggest question before the translator. No doubt the title looks a hurdle in translating the text in the beginning, but it also enables the translator to revise her awareness of parallel movements and literatures to search for a similar word in a similar context.

It is not just the words but the tone that also poses questions to the translator in these two texts. In *Karobran*, there is a deliberate attempt to justify well-intentioned whites. So after every incident and statement criticizing the whites comes an incident or statement defending whites, some good whites. Whether the writer intended to do so or the posthumously published autobiographical novel had to take in the white editor's interference is out of the scope of this discussion, no doubt. But, selection of the tone of the writer that has to be represented becomes a debatable question for the translator. There is no deliberate attempt to justify the whites in *Wandering*

Girl as it is in *Karobran*. In this background, when the writer says, "Through the misguided minds of earnest white people we were taken away from our natural parents. This affected all of us. We lost our identity through being put into missions, forced to abide by the European way". Does the literal meaning of the word "earnest" really fit in there? Does it work in harmony with the text as a whole? Does the tone of the original play the decisive role in translation? If that is so, how to decide what is the tone the writer intended to use and what is the tone used and what is the tone that the translator wants to represent in the translation to the readers of the target language?

Talking of language, Australian English subtly and sometimes overtly echoes the Australian contempt for Queen's English. Aboriginal English reflects it more. Australian English has its roots in the colonial history and the settlement of convict colonies and Aboriginal English has its roots in its thousands of aboriginal languages, their interacting with English speaking people and the forcible displacement they are subjected to. Thus, like Aboriginal Movement and Aboriginal Literature, Aboriginal English also works with protest as its driving spirit. The dilemma before the translator while translating this English is whether to choose the standard target language (if something like that exists at all) or to go for a dialect and to go for which dialect. While translating aboriginal texts into Telugu the translator may not find it difficult to translate Aboriginal English for Telugu, like any other language, offers a wide variety of dialects. But, the question is what is being conveyed here by translating in to one of the dialects of the target language? That the English aboriginal people use and write is not "standard" English? Is it merely that? Or also to signify the cultural background of the language that has been thrust on the colonized and that it led to the elimination of the indigenous languages? Even if the translator is offered a variety of dialects in the target language, which dialect has to be chosen and what should be the criteria? It is a well-known fact that a dialect represents the history, culture, society, class, caste, gender, race, region and religion. All these factors interlinked and interconnected produce a dialect. Hence, a dialect is used just to show that Aboriginal English is not Standard English. Is this not violently displacing the cultural

context of Aboriginal English? Is it also not violent attribution of a Telugu dialect to an aboriginal situation? For instance, Telangana dialect is loaded with the history of the long, atrocious rule of the *Nizam* dynasty, poverty and famine of the area. If it is Rayalaseema, the dialect is loaded with the dry landscape, craving for food and water, and a lifestyle which is centered on the word 'scarcity'. Not less is the impact of factionalist politics on this already natural calamity-stricken dry land. As I have said earlier, it is not just region, but factors like class, caste and gender also which contribute to the birth and survival of a dialect.

Another crucial issue that Aboriginal Literature is concerned with is the issue of half-castes. Most aboriginal writers are half-castes and their autobiographies reflect their trauma and conflict with the society and their identity crisis for being recognized as half-castes. This is not a mere term which just introduces us to the people born of two races. This term carries the colonial experience of the Aborigines and the elimination of their culture, race, identity, languages, land and independence. This term also carries with it the sense of shame and humiliation that aboriginal people experience for being or for being recognized as, half-castes. This term also reminds the readers of the term 'full bloods' in contrast with half-castes and its connotations in aboriginal usage and white usage. This term also reveals of the agony and nostalgia of the aborigines for their aboriginal past and for their gradually disappearing aboriginal physical traits like colour, features and texture of hair. This term also throws light on the historical and social situation of the half-castes who are owned and admitted by neither whites nor blacks. When the writer has chosen to use this word, it is with the intention of conveying all the above-mentioned connotations of the word, may be many more. How to translate this word with all the connotations it carries? If I translate it as *Shankara*, the available word that means hybridization, it may not convey the agony of the Aborigines and the atrocities of whites. It may not convey the sense of shame and humiliation that Aborigines associate with this word. It may not convey the trauma of the Aborigines who are neither whites nor blacks. The choice is before the translator to negotiate with the writer, through the text, about the term and convey it to the readers of the target language.

Another word that invites a discussion and discourse with the writer is 'mate'. Mate is a very commonly used word in Australia. But translating it into Telugu becomes difficult because spoken Telugu does not permit such addressing since it sounds archaic and bookish. For instance, if literally translated it is, *snehitudu, mitrudu or nestam*. These words are not used in colloquial Telugu. In *Karobran*, Tom and Bill are two characters who seem to be aware of and very active in workers' union activities. When they address each other as 'mate', it also talks about their social, economic and cultural context. When this context and that word have to be translated into Telugu, not only a similar word but also a similar context has to be kept in mind. It is quite clear that the average working class character will not use words like *snehitudu, mitrudu, and nestudu* while talking to each other. These words may be used while referring to friends and co-workers but only in the context of speaking from the dais, but not while talking among themselves. A word that is used in a similar context in Telugu is 'comrade', though it sounds a bit dramatic and not used frequently and in a way used in formal occasions like the above mentioned Telugu words.

Some of the words that are quite common in the source language may become quite formal in the target language and may transform the nature of the character if viewed from the standards of the target language. For instance, Isabelle, in *Karobran*, in some context says, "No, Thanks." The literal equivalents of 'thanks' in Telugu, *krutagnatalu, dhanyavadalu*, no longer exist in colloquial Telugu. English words have taken their place. But, at the same time, if the word 'thanks' is used as it is in the source text, readers may not be in a position to locate the working class (domestic servant) and may find it odd. Thus starts the dilemma of the translator to choose between the writer and the readers.

When Aboriginal Literature is translated, it is not just language, but certain concepts that are used in the original that become difficult to be translated. For instance, 'black servant' is the word used for the protagonist in both *Wandering Girl* and *Karobran*. Telugu readers, through translations, are familiar with the concept of slavery. But, aboriginal writers deliberately avoid the use of the word 'slave', though it was slavery in a sense that was inflicted on the Aborigines by whites. The choice before the translator is to

either use the word *baanisa*, which is the literal translation of the word slave, which is accessible and easily understandable to the readers or translate the term 'black servant' literally in order to be closer to the original. Does the translator want to convey the interpretations of the loaded word to the readers or chooses not to talk about it depends on the translator's willingness or reluctance to understand the writer and translate not just the text but the writer to the readers of the target language.

In a literature which is the outburst of the silence long inflicted, even silences become eloquent. While Glenyse Ward decides to narrate only a major and crucial part of her life as a slave, Monica Clare decides to leave out a major and crucial part of her life. This can be related to the selective memory, the writer's option of selection of narrating or leaving out the most crucial part of one's life. It can be related to the strategies of the writer to evoke questions in the readers. If this is the negotiation between the reader and the writer, the so-called tightening up of the narrative, for it is dull and unadventurous, decides the writer-translator discourse. I use the word dull and unadventurous because the publisher of the translation may take that stand about the translated text or the translator and the publisher may assume that this may be the response of the target language readers, who are used to a particular literary tradition. And it is here that the unheard dialogue between the writer and translator begins and the translator decides whether the translation should be reader friendly or writer friendly.

Another aspect that comes to the translator as a revelation about the interpretations of the source text is the question of singular and plural in Telugu. The conversation between Isabelle and Tom and Bill in *Karobran* is very significant in this context. Bill and Tom invite Isabelle to join them while sitting in the restaurant. In English, there is no problem of the connotations associated with the singular and plural second person. But, in Telugu, this becomes a crucial issue. Since Isabelle is a woman, a half-caste and a working class woman, how do Tom and Bill address her? Tom and Bill's white male identity also matters a lot in this context. Do they talk on the level of being equals? Or, is there any discrimination? This can be conveyed in the use of the singular and the plural in this conversation. If the translator ignores it, thinking that the writer

may never have thought about this aspect of the text, he is losing out a very good opportunity to depict the situation. At the same time, if the translator does it, when there is no such obvious effort in the original, it may be reading too much into the text.

Not only that translation involves research but also it can be said that translation can be viewed as one of the best means of research too. Especially with a literature like aboriginal writing, it is more so. For instance, reference to "the tribals" in *Karobran* raised questions in my mind about the divisions among the aborigines when I read the text as a researcher. But when I was translating the text, many more questions about the identity cropped up. I translated aborigines as *adivasis*. Tribals become *girijans*. Are these words not used as synonyms in Telugu? While aborigines are tribals according to the main stream, there are people who are considered tribals by the aborigines. Then who are these tribals according to the mainstream society and according to the aborigines? How do the tribals look at Aborigines and the mainstream society?

The problems like cultural specificity, the use of dialects, multiple interpretations and others of translation in fact culminate in research. Thus, they prove they are not problems but only tools for the closer examination of the text. I write about my above experiences of translating two aboriginal women's texts, not to discuss how many problems I faced in my task, but only to share how the supposed-to-be-problems of translation give rise to thought-provoking discussions and debates and help the researchers and help connect research and translation.

A Theory of Translation: A Reflection

P.P. GIRIDHAR*

Asked whether he thought about theory when he translated, A K Ramanujam is said to have come back with, "Does a carpenter think about theory when he carvents?" This counter question, if it is not followed by a qualified stretch of sentences might lead to an impression, which is not right viz. that there is no theory of carpentry. A carpenter's carpenting behaviour is neither instinctive nor genetic. There is a cognitive grid, a cerebral matrix, a mentally represented knowledge, which is what drives a carpenter to do what he does. This is the 'carpenting competence'. Such a cognitive grid exists also for the translator which is what drives his translations and which may be called 'translating competence'. There is a need to unspool this grid, to access and define its being and nature. Chomsky and Co took 40 years to unveil 'grammatical competence'. We may take more. I don't agree that translation is a subjectively conditioned hermeneutics. It is in the ultimate run hermeneutics, but not subjective. That there is no science or theory or are no laws of translation, as Peter Newmark does, seems an extreme position to take. It is illogical to say that if we can't access the mental representation, it is subjective, but if we can, it is objective. And to find out what this grid looks like, what its constituents are etc. is NOT to be prescriptive\normative.

There are basically two types of phenomena in the universe: rule-governed phenomena and creatively rule-governed phenomena. The latter are those that are created by the human mind or have to do with consciousness. Language is the best example of a creatively rule-governed phenomenon. Translation is another. 'Translating competence' is perhaps a composite module. The 'rule-governed' part would perhaps mean that like in human language there are parts of translation theory which are not functions of cultural distinctiveness any more than the explanation for the phenomenon of the falling object or the running train or the computer chip or the

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economic law of demand and supply are functions of cultural distinctiveness or of a societal ethos.

We need thus to identify these generalised crossculturally valid ways of talking about the being, the analysis and the evaluation of a translated piece, having allowed a cultural/societal input.

Theories, to be so called, should be globally valid. That is, the theory should hold for all instances of the domain of inquiry. In illustrative words, a Paninian theory of language should be true of all languages. A Derridian theory of literature should hold good for all literatures. Explanations of translative acts that are language-specific and culture-bound cannot be theories. They are descriptions/documentations of local facts.

Translations

M. SRIDHAR * & ALLADI UMA *

Voice-box

Devipriya

My palm
is a voice-box.
How else from this pen
Outpour onto these pages
these images
these dream-words
in sonorous sounds?

(Translation of Devipriya's Telugu poem 'Swaram' by M. Sridhar and Alladi Uma)

Realization

Devipriya

Walking on the road
I feel I'm the road itself—
Lying down the light of the lamp
I feel like the lamp itself—
When I look at the sky
I feel I'm the sky itself—
When I browse through the paper
I feel like the paper itself—
Only when I ignite my thoughts into words
do I realize
that I'm still
the moving fiery bard.

(Translation of Devipriya's Telugu poem 'Gnanam' by M. Sridhar and Alladi Uma)

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* Dr. Alladi Uma teaches English at the University of Hyderabad.

(Devipriya is a journalist and poet who has published extensively.
He is a writer with leftist leanings.)

Secrecy

Pemmaraju Gopalakrishna

Never do the waters toying with you and your boat
remind you of the whirlpools.

Never do the sea waves playing at your feet
warn you of the impending upsurge.

Never do those claiming to be friends, guarding you
whisper of your turn in the ensuing encounter.

Never do the landlords professing to protect you
yet, with your blood, build palaces
let it slip that
you were born, grew and perished at the very foundation.

(Translation of Pemmaraju Gopalakrishna's 'Rahasyam' by
M. Sridhar and Alladi Uma)

(Pemmaraju Gopalakrishna is a poet who writes with a clear social
consciousness.)

Feminist Manifesto

Ghantasala Nirmala

Before you are excited and cry hoarse
that women are exceedingly pure, they are goddesses and
Mother
Sitas
before you get angry and abuse us for denying it
grasp the real truth
Don't go on
attributing exceptionally virtuous nature to us
rubbing on us all great qualities of goodness
don't douse us in garlands of praise
in the sultry heat of wifely duties that doesn't emit wisdom

Freedom is a human being's right—equality a hymn we recite

We have a vision
Because it had not become a collective vision
because our sight and voice had been curbed in the name of preserving family secrets

we had not spoken out all these days
we had not strayed away from the codes the male world had imposed

Now a question is tormenting us
an existential predicament is bothering us day and night
We are half the workforce

The burden imposed on us to increase the wealth of the universe
is half too heavy to bear

Still
we get a raw deal when it comes to wages of labour or official rules or appointments
in the mirror of equality ours is always a belittled figure

It's we who sow the seeds in the fields
It's we who rear the human seeds into fruit-bearing trees
It's we who till now have gathered the gleanings of your sympathy
It's we who have stood up now with only our abilities as weapons
to oppose your callousness in ignoring
our sweat which streamed out for all of us
our tears of patience we stifled for ages
Yes, it's we who have cast off our shyness to confront you for our share of love and respect

Our path is clear to us
Our feet are ready to run on stony and thorny paths
Before we beat the drum

before we blow the conch to proclaim the struggle
 here is the forewarning for you—
 As father, as brother, as husband, as son
 love us equally
 criticize us rationally and give us only due respect
 When this does not happen
 our social outlook will turn toxic
 the welfare of the world will turn venomous for us
 Don't drive us towards destruction and annihilation of all
 After all if the struggle must begin we are not responsible for
 any damage

(Translation of Ghantasala Nirmala's Telugu poem, 'Feminist Manifesto' by M. Sridhar and Alladi Uma)
 (Ghantasal Nirmala is a free-lancer and a poet with a feminist consciousness.)

M. Sridhar & Alladi Uma

War-child

Kondepudi Nirmala

I am not worried any longer
 as to why it is impossible to demean myself any further
 Except for one on the topmost step
 there is no danger of tumbling down
 If your science which does not solve any problems
 if your maths which cannot calculate tear drops
 if all your wonderful experiments put together
 only serve to attack with knives and daggers
 my being which adds up to no more than an inch
 and which only helps to increasingly simplify
 your uncultured infanticides
 that only reveal your dwarf-like nature
 that also show what a powerful enemy I am
 For any mother
 who is born in a country where she cannot love her own
 reflection
 who steps into the world of ghostly spirits
 thoughts take shape not in the mind but in the guts

Looking at the plot against our multiplying thoughts
 Looking at the conspiracy against the foetus in the womb
 Looking at the modern-day Devaki
 who has come to sacrifice her children succumbing to
 Kamsa's evil
 designs
 Looking at the dual attitude injected into her blood stream
 I feel nothing matters any more
 the fangs of ignorance had pierced so deep in society
 the backbones of wisdom had been broken so long ago
 the snake bite or scorpion sting cannot hurt anew
 I feel like crying
 I feel like laughing even as I am scared
 An unformed shape that cannot call out to its mother
 When you poke the needle into the vein
 with your microscope eyes which help you count the
 minutest germs
 and insects
 to determine the life and death question of whether the foetus
 is
 female or male
 the effect of anesthesia does not let me be conscious
 There is not much distance between the state of being
 unconscious
 and death
 No matter how many bodies are piled up
 No matter it amounting to utter helplessness
 I feel like clenching my teeth and waging a battle
 Translations

with the support of the dead bodies
 like Abhimanyu shielding himself with a chariot wheel
 to make sure the life-light is not blown off
 Victory or defeat I feel like clasping the wounds
 I feel I must be born a girl
 amidst you who are regressing with atomic speed
 saying that one should tie pestle around one's head if
 madness is

cured or that sati should be committed if rains were to come
 at the right time
 into your unwelcome lifeless hearts
 into a tribe which is going astray blind and without enderness
 into the ultra modern human slaughter house
 even as I turn out to be a mother feeding a deformed child
 out of pity more than love with shame and even with
 unbearable sorrow
 It will be like disjointed incomplete pictures
 taking fine shape at one go—

(Translation of Kondepudi Nirmala's Telugu poem
 'Yuddhasishuvu' by M. Sridhar and Alladi Uma)

(Kondepudi Nirmala writes poetry and fiction with a feminist consciousness and has published extensively.)

Line of Sorrow

Kalpana Rentala

Yes, it's now a heroic tale
 A play that hasn't still ended
 Though more than fifty years have passed
 my history is an eternally bleeding injury
 of a body split right in the middle
 No matter how many times the divider is divided
 I will remain the remainder

Dangling deaths all over
 Chastity floating around in wells
 Pativratyams buried under the earth

Black, white or red
 whatever colour they may be
 the religious veils over the faces are just the same

Bodies full of cracks

are but nail gores of male beasts
 They are yonis scattered far and wide
 after he has squashed and thrown them away
 History is full of my flags of victory
 of my body branded with blood!

This is a never-ending conversation
 An un-severed memory

(From the experience of having read Borders and Boundaries)

(Translation of Kalpana Rentala's Telugu poem 'Vishada Rekha'
 by M. Sridhar and Alladi Uma)

Arithmetic of Handcuffs

Kalpana Rentala

I have been counting
 The bars around me
 It's an old sum

I am coming back
 to the same place I started
 but I can't solve the sum
 Ammamma told this to amma
 Amma to me
 But this old sum remains an eternal question!
 Would at least my little daughter escape
 the problem of this sum tomorrow?

(Translation of Kalpana Rentala's Telugu poem 'Sankella Ganitam'
 by M. Sridhar and Alladi Uma)

(Kalpana Rentala works for Andhra Bhoomi and is a poet who
 writes about women's place in the changing world.)

Divergence

S. V. Satyanarayana

I savour sweet bottled memories
 Colourful scenes

How exotic
layers of experience
circling my eyes!

True....

As long as one is lost in thoughts
this world would look a beautiful orchard
but when one steps into the real
one perceives
thorny bushes,
poisonous insects.

(Translation of S. V. Satyanarayana's Telugu poem 'Vairudhyam'
by M. Sridhar and Alladi Uma)

(S.V. Satyanarayana teaches in Osmania University and is a poet
and critic who writes progressive poetry.)

From Stone Age To Stone Age...

Banala Srinivasa Rao

Mechanised hearts that show disgust for human fragrances
from the
folds of the earth.

Ears that cannot take in the notes of the koel. Lungs that
happily
inhale only carbon monoxide.

Black smoke-snakes that have devoured the stars.
Glass mansions that have robbed the rainbows.

The moon that has smeared soot on its smooth cheeks.
Nostrils that distastefully "sip" pollution at least little by little
with
against the siren.
Raindrops whose signatures disappear seconds after falling
on the

earth's frying pan.

The air that twirls around itself feeling suffocated.

The morning bird that chops its own wings at night in its nest.

Clouds that lie inebriated having drunk from the ocean.

The sun that never wakes up in the eastern hearts.

Picking up tearful memories that are dropping

Shaking hands each moment with death

Melting, while waiting, sighing

as moments turn into centuries

Loathing the natural

Embracing the unnatural

Carving sorrowful letters

on the walls of experience

Applying new colours to the face

without removing the stains on history

Reading lessons of the future

in the dark light of the present

Silently as human trees on either side of the roads...

Memory of long lost existence all sensations having dried up,
all feelings and experiences lingering nervously somewhere
in the layers of the heart.

Shapes sprouting artificially having lost all human qualities.

Vaguely remembering having hidden all 'isms' carefully in
the pockets,

but having lost humanism somewhere.

Many centuries have passed since our death as human beings.
Hence, a new life now.

From Stone age once again to Stone age...

(Translation of Banala Srinivasa Rao's 'Raati yugam lonchi
raati yugam loki...' by M. Sridhar and Alladi Uma)

(Banala Srinivasa Rao teaches English and writes postmodern
poetry.)

Never-ending Illusions

M. Sridhar

The hands of the clock
that imagine they are crossing
time boundaries
as they go ticking
the traffic light
that thinks it's bringing time to a halt
even for a very short while
as it changes its colours
and mere ideals

that seek to bring about changes
in social structure
keep moving round and round—
one unable to go beyond the clock's frame
another unable to cross the road boundaries
and the other unable to go beyond the confines
of their narrow thinking—
in never-ending
circles of illusion

(Translation of M. Sridhar's Telugu poem
'Paribhramistunnayellappudu' by the author)

(M. Sridhar teaches English, writes poetry and is a translator.)

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